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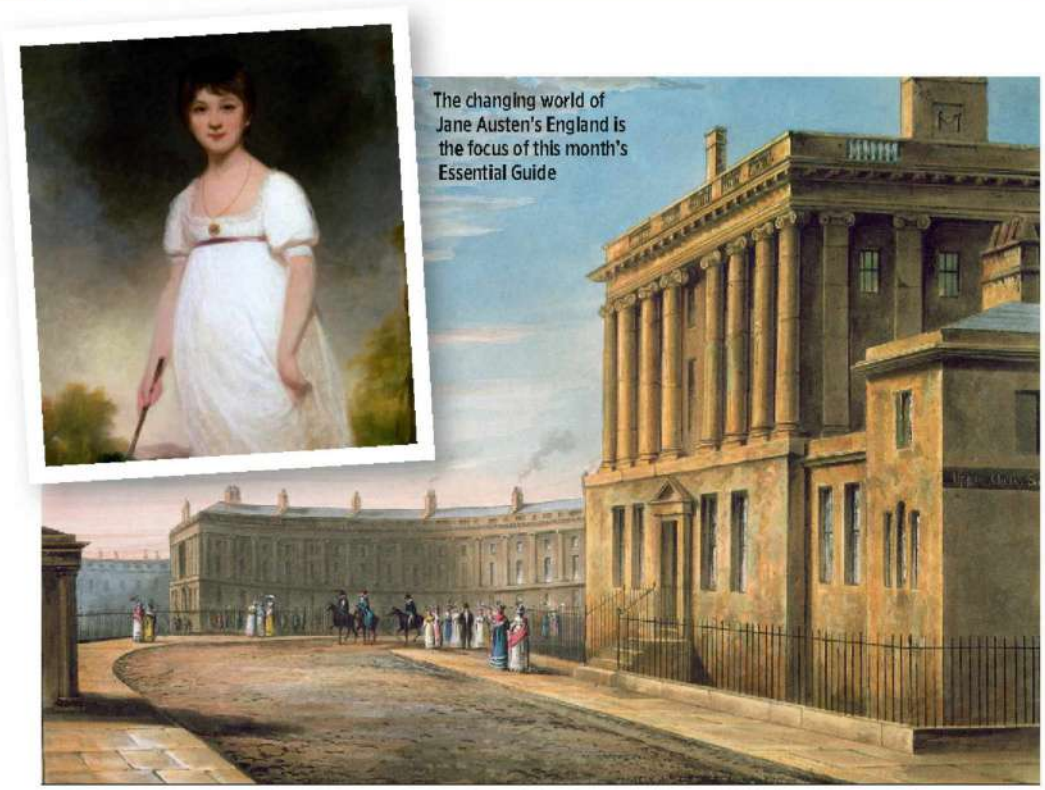

On the face of it, Jane Austen's novels might appear to focus solely on romance, love and the importance of making a good marriage in Georgian England. Yet **read between the lines and you'll find evidence of the changing times in which Austen lived and wrote**. Britain was at war for most of Austen's life – three of her own brothers served in the military – and rebellion and unrest was also rife on home soil. **For this month's Essential Guide, we've enlisted Dr Lizzie Rogers to help us explore the world of Jane Austen** – from the seismic changes taking place across the globe, to the drawing rooms of Regency society, and, of course, Austen's own life and works. Turn to page 23 to get started.

Elsewhere, with the *Barbie* movie still making waves in cinemas, **we take a look at a selection of toys that continue to enthral children and adults alike** – from the yo-yo to the hula hoop (*page 47*). We also share some incredible images of Stonehenge, an ancient site that has played host to a huge range of events over the centuries, including music festivals and druid ceremonies (*page 54*); examine what might have happened had the so-called Glorious Revolution failed (*page 16*); and **uncover seven fascinating facts about Tudor clothing** (*page 20*).

See you next month!

Charlotte Hodgman
Editor

THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

25m
The number of plastic hula hoops sold by Wham-O in the first four months after the toy's launch

25
The weight, in tonnes, of the larger sarsen stones at Stonehenge

41
Jane Austen's age when she died in July 1817, possibly from Addison's disease or Hodgkin's lymphoma

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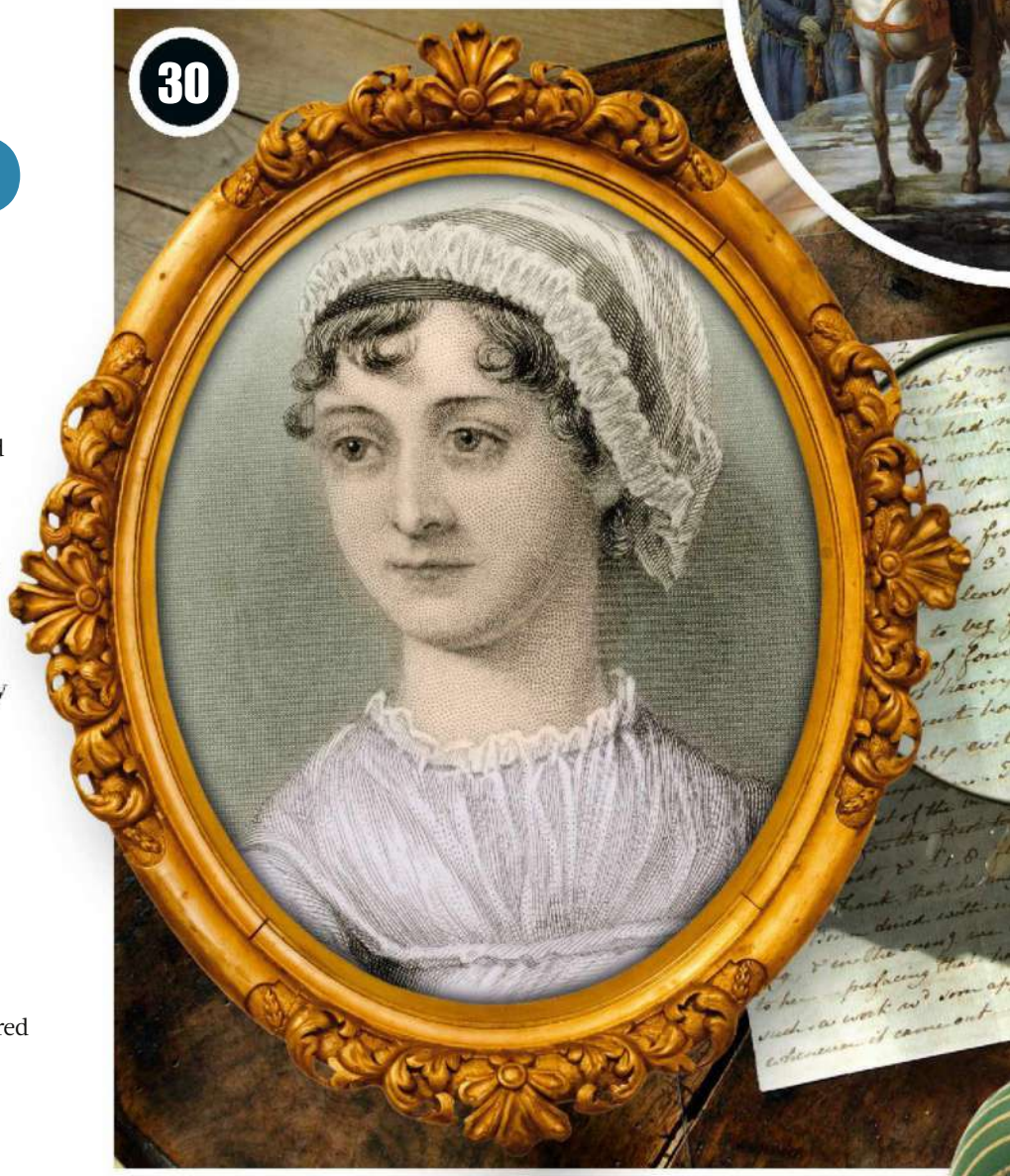

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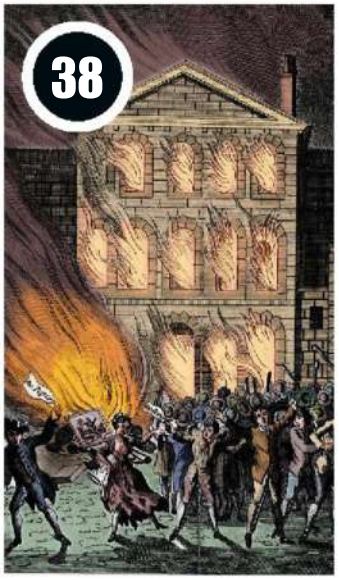

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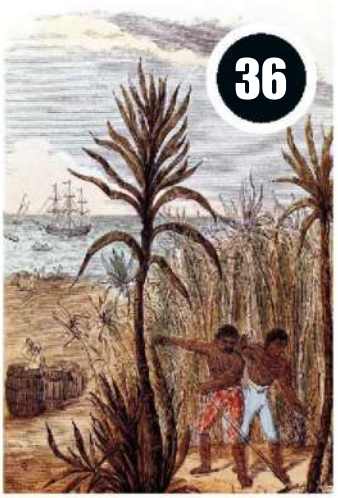

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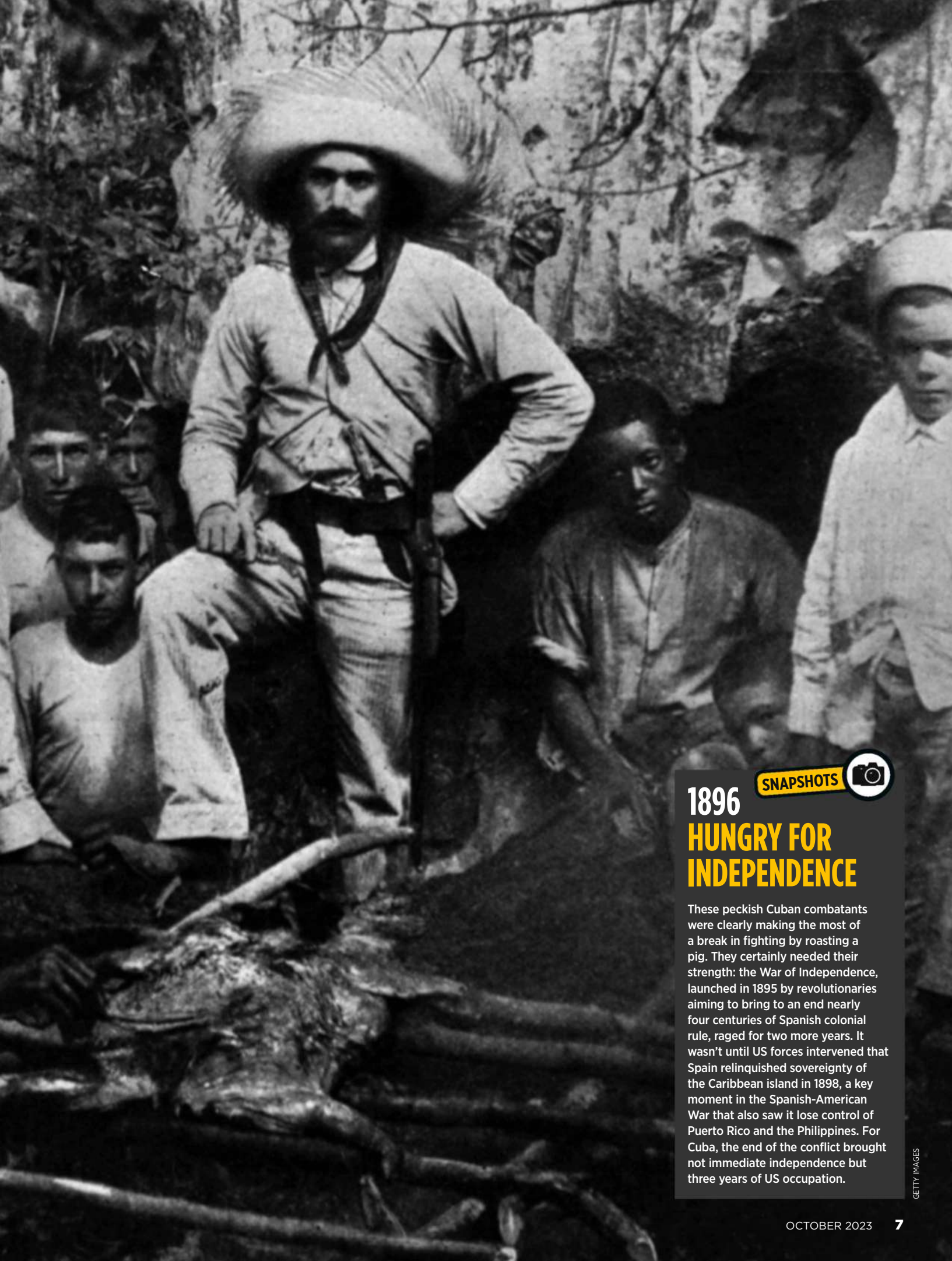

SNAPSHOTS

1896 HUNGRY FOR INDEPENDENCE

These peckish Cuban combatants were clearly making the most of a break in fighting by roasting a pig. They certainly needed their strength: the War of Independence, launched in 1895 by revolutionaries aiming to bring to an end nearly four centuries of Spanish colonial rule, raged for two more years. It wasn't until US forces intervened that Spain relinquished sovereignty of the Caribbean island in 1898, a key moment in the Spanish-American War that also saw it lose control of Puerto Rico and the Philippines. For Cuba, the end of the conflict brought not immediate independence but three years of US occupation.

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SNAPSHOTS

1962 HOLY SEE CHANGE

In big organisations, change happens very slowly – and they don't come bigger than the Catholic Church, with some 1.3 billion adherents as of 2023. But nearly two millennia after it had been established, Pope John XXIII, recognised that *aggiornamento* (updating) was due. So in October 1962 he convened the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican – 'Vatican II', the first session of which is pictured – to modify Catholic practices and teachings, with the aim of connecting better with people in the modern world. The resulting changes were transformational, among them allowing the celebration of Mass in the vernacular (not just Latin) and introducing the concept of religious freedom.

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SNAPSHOTS

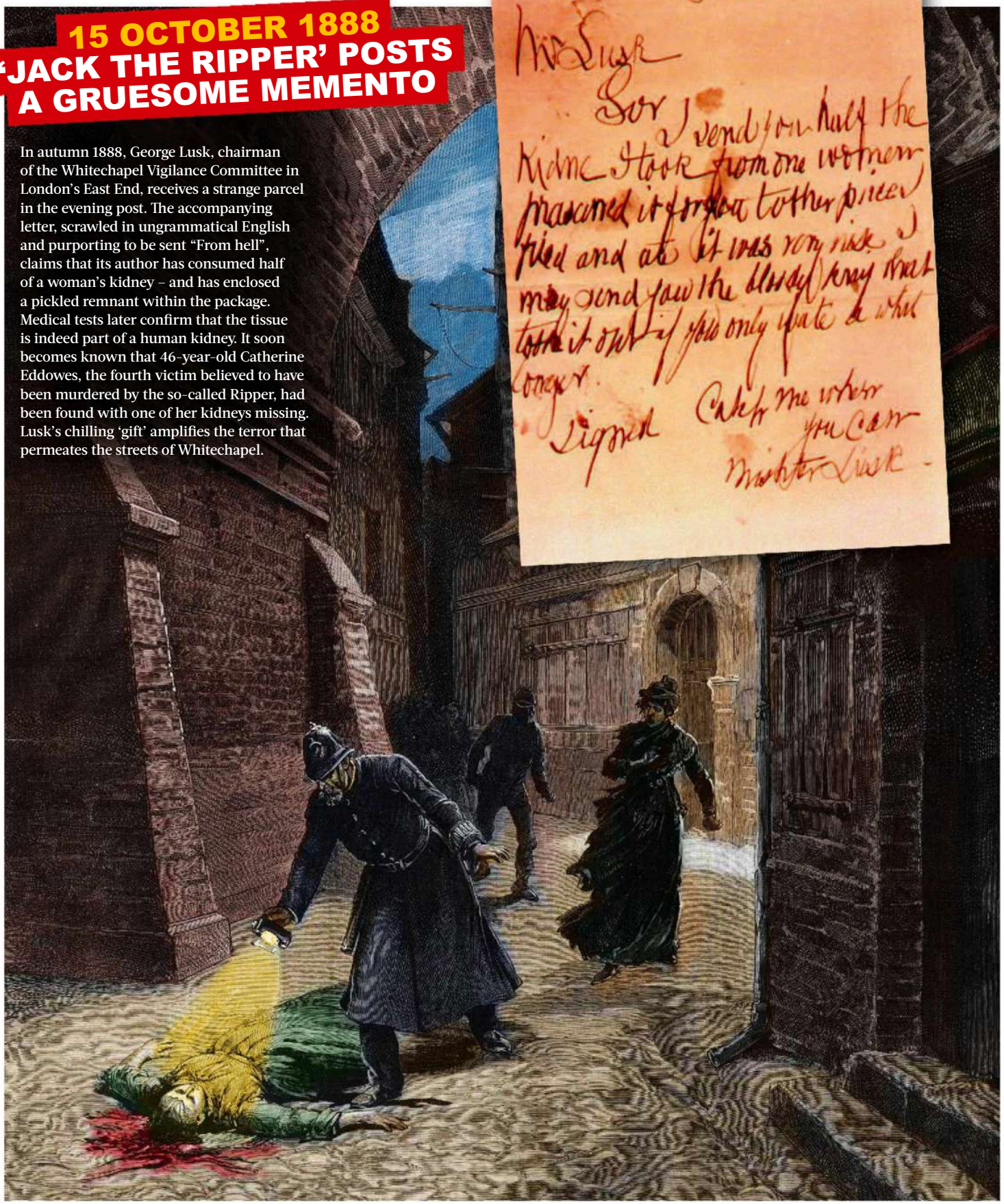
1886 ROYAL ROBES

The Chao Phraya River in central Bangkok is thronged with vessels, including huge, ornate royal barges, as the King of Thailand travels to the Buddhist temple of Wat Arun for a Thot Kathin ceremony in the late 19th century. During this ritual, conducted in October or November at the end of each rainy season, devout Buddhists present new robes and alms to monks emerging from months of cloistered study. The ceremony dates back at least seven centuries; even today, many Thais consider participation an important part of their spiritual lives, and a key way to earn merit.

GETTY IMAGES

15 OCTOBER 1888
'JACK THE RIPPER' POSTS A GRUESOME MEMENTO

In autumn 1888, George Lusk, chairman of the Whitechapel Vigilance Committee in London's East End, receives a strange parcel in the evening post. The accompanying letter, scrawled in ungrammatical English and purporting to be sent "From hell", claims that its author has consumed half of a woman's kidney – and has enclosed a pickled remnant within the package. Medical tests later confirm that the tissue is indeed part of a human kidney. It soon becomes known that 46-year-old Catherine Eddowes, the fourth victim believed to have been murdered by the so-called Ripper, had been found with one of her kidneys missing. Lusk's chilling 'gift' amplifies the terror that permeates the streets of Whitechapel.


From hell
Mr Lusk
Sor I send you half the
Kidne I took from one woemen
preserved it for you tother piece
fried and ate it was very nice I
may send you the bloody knife that
took it out if you only wate a bit
longer.
Signed Catch me when
you can
Mishter Lusk

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X5

24 OCTOBER 1901
ANNIE EDSON TAYLOR CONQUERS NIAGARA FALLS

Broke and desperate to avoid the poorhouse, Annie Edson Taylor hatches a plan to mark her 63rd birthday by riding a barrel over Niagara Falls. Unsurprisingly, many people doubt her chances of survival, and a huge crowd gathers to watch as she climbs into the barrel, clutching a heart-shaped pillow and an anvil. After the air inside is pressurised with a bicycle pump, and a cork seals her in, the barrel is launched. It plunges over the falls, vanishes into dense spray – then, miraculously, reappears intact. Taylor emerges, shaken but essentially unharmed – and urges others not to repeat her feat.

29 OCTOBER 1618
SIR WALTER RALEGH MEETS A GRISLY END

At the end of a life of adventure and conflict, the English explorer's luck runs out. After his men violate a treaty by ransacking a Spanish outpost during an expedition to South America, Ralegh is sentenced to death. Escorted to Westminster's Old Palace Yard, his composure astonishes onlookers. Refusing a blindfold, Ralegh reputedly implores his executioner to "Strike, man, strike!" – and off comes his head.

25 OCTOBER 1924
'ZINOVIEV LETTER' STORY DERAILS LABOUR'S ELECTION HOPES

As British voters prepare to vote in a general election on 29 October, the conservative *Daily Mail* newspaper leads with an explosive headline, alleging that socialists acting on orders from Moscow are engaged in a "CIVIL WAR PLOT". The tabloid claims that a letter (later proved to be a forgery) from Bolshevik functionary Grigory Zinoviev has ordered Britain's 'Reds' to "paralyse the Army and Navy". The scandal fuels disquiet at Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's recent decision to recognise the Soviet Union, and contributes to Labour's electoral defeat four days later.

30 OCTOBER 1501
CESARE BORGIA HOSTS A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

The Papal Palace in Rome hosts a feast later known as the 'Ballet of Chestnuts' like no other, organised by Cesare Borgia and attended by his father, Pope Alexander VI, and sister, Lucrezia. Rome's finest courtesans crawl between candelabras, across a floor littered with chestnuts, as the papal party looks on. The 'ballet's' notoriety is probably fuelled by the Borgias' numerous enemies.

DIED: 15 OCT 1917
MATA HARI

The 41-year-old exotic dancer, born Margaretha Geertruida Zelle in the Netherlands, is executed by firing squad in Vincennes, France, having been found guilty of spying. Her bohemian lifestyle, sexual allure and extraordinary death ensure her reputation as a *femme fatale*.

BORN: 25 OCT 1881
PABLO PICASSO

Born in Málaga, Spain, Picasso is destined to become one of the 20th century's most influential artists. A pioneer of Cubism, he will create more than 20,000 paintings, drawings, sculptures, ceramics and other items over his prolific career, including such iconic works as *Guernica*.

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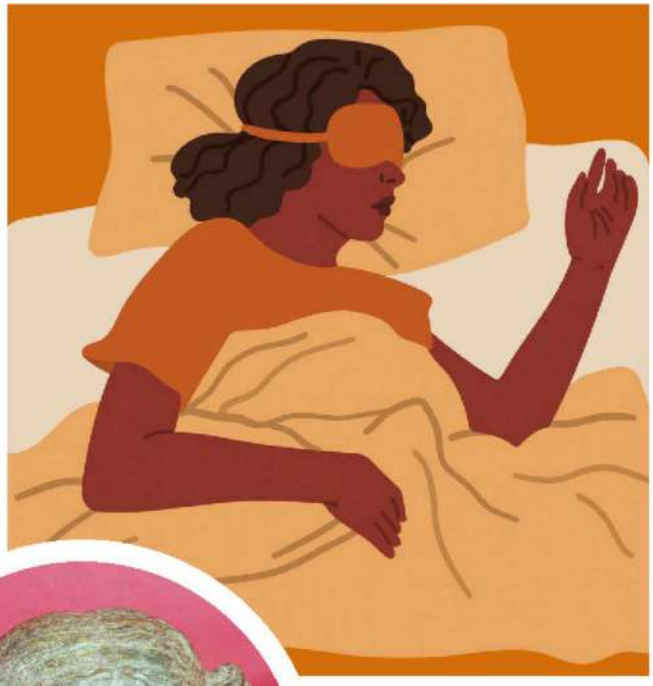
LIFE HACK #05

Get a good night's sleep

Being able to enjoy eight hours' straight slumber is today seen as something of a superpower. But, as **Justin Pollard** reveals, attitudes to sleep and its medical importance have evolved over the centuries

In our modern 24/7 world, it can sometimes seem as if we've finally finished the job Macbeth started, and murdered sleep. But surely the lazy days of history can provide some tips for enjoying a restful night of slumber?

One advantage enjoyed by our ancestors was that nights were darker and quieter in the past. Even so, people did suffer from sleep problems. We know from Egyptian medical papyri that drugs extracted from the opium poppy, belladonna and nightshade were available, all of which could help with slumber – but also, if taken incautiously, cause a more final and permanent rest.



Struggling to drop off? In ancient Greece you might pray to Hypnos, god of sleep, depicted in this first or second-century AD bronze

ANCIENT IDEAS

The ancient Greeks thought a lot about the subject, too. Hypnos, the god of sleep, makes his first known appearance in Book 14 of Homer's *Iliad*. Sleep also formed the basis of medical treatment at the temples of Asklepios. The sick were brought to sleep at these sites where, during the night, they would be treated with drugs by priests. Dreaming of Asklepios, patients would wake up cured. Or so the theory went.

The ancient Greeks also pondered the factors that make for a good night's sleep. Aristotle thought that ingested food emitted fumes, which entered the brain through blood vessels, causing sleepiness. (Interestingly, recent studies of several foods such as walnuts and fatty fish suggest that they do promote sleep.) Democritus of Abdera thought that insomnia was caused by an unhealthy diet – and modern sleep specialists also urge us to avoid consuming some substances, particularly in the hours before bed.

As long ago as the 17th century, English physician Sir Thomas Willis noticed that strong coffee seemed to keep him awake.

Assuming we've dosed up on walnuts and avoided coffee, how long should we sleep? In the late 12th century, Moses ben Maimon – also known as Maimonides, and the most influential Jewish physician working in the Arab world – suggested that a single period of eight hours' sleep, ending just before sunrise, was the perfect amount.

Recent studies suggest that, through much of the pre-modern period, the norm was not one sleep a night but two. The idea of 'first sleep' and 'second sleep' appears in numerous medieval and early modern diaries and letters, and is mentioned in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. This 'biphasic sleep' was recorded across the world, in Africa and Australia as well as Europe. First sleep, lasting a couple of hours, was usually taken between 9pm and 11pm, depending on the season. After this came a wakeful period known as 'the watch', which could be filled with letter-writing or praying – a quiet and contemplative time of day. For the working classes, 'the watch' provided another chance to catch up on chores. And for the young (or young at heart) in families, who may all have shared one bed, this was a moment in which a little intimacy might be enjoyed – provided, that is, you weren't interrupted by the house-breakers and thieves who also used this time for a bit of after-hours work.

SQUEEZED SLUMBER

By the 19th century, the advent of shift working, resulting in the need to adhere to 'clock time' rather than simply working to daylight hours, began to affect natural rhythms. With chores still to be done after work, and improved artificial lighting in which to do them, sleep became more compressed. Bedtime got later, but morning started at the same time each day, regardless of the season or whether the sun was actually up. Sleep was now squashed into a shorter period, and the era of monophasic (single) sleeps began.

If all this seems a little depressing, next time you find yourself wide awake in the middle of the night, remember that you're not an insomniac – you're just channelling your inner ancestor!

JUSTIN POLLARD is an acclaimed historian and writer. As a historical consultant he has worked on more than 50 film and TV projects, from *Elizabeth* and *Mulan* to the BBC quiz show *QI*

GETTY IMAGES X4

WHAT IF... JAMES II AND VII HAD KEPT HIS THRONE?

Nige Tassell asks **Professor Ted Vallance** about the future of both monarchy and state religion had James II and VII not been usurped in 1688

In late 1688, King James II of England and Ireland, James VII of Scotland, saw his near-four-year reign drift to an end, after which he disappeared into exile. Replacing him on the throne were his son-in-law William III of Orange, the leader of the Dutch Republic, and William's wife, James's daughter Mary II. In England, the change in monarchs, known as the Glorious Revolution, was achieved with little bloodshed. James chose to disband his army, allowing William and his troops, having landed in Devon, to make their way to London relatively unimpeded.

It might have been a largely peaceful surrender of power, but it was a significant one, too. William and Mary's joint reign broke the notion of the divine right of kings by introducing a 'contract' between the monarchy and the people, as represented by Parliament. James, in contrast, had favoured a tighter concentration of power within one individual: himself. Had James repelled William and Mary's invasion, what kind of monarchy might have developed under him?

"First of all, we need to understand James's aims for Parliament," explains Professor Ted Vallance of the University of Roehampton and author of *The Glorious Revolution: 1688 – Britain's Fight For Liberty* (Little, Brown, 2006). "He aimed to fashion a House of Commons that would vote for the repeal of the Penal Laws, which excluded Catholics from public life. In this respect, he sought to make Parliament more 'manageable', and to use his prerogative powers to dissolve it when it became troublesome."

DID YOU KNOW?

FUTILE FIGHTBACK

After he was forced into exile in France in 1688, James didn't just give up the fight. The following March, backed by French troops, he landed in Ireland to build support for a comeback – but was defeated by William III at the battle of the Boyne in 1690.

Professor Vallance certainly cautions against any notion that the king sought to remove the legislature wholesale. "Had James done away with Parliament entirely, it would have actually made it hard for him to govern," he explains. "Parliament represented England's governing classes – its most powerful figures and the individuals who ensured the smooth operation of local government. The rapid swings of political fortune over James's reign were already creating a chaotic political situation at local level."

RISK OF REVOLUTION

If the situation had been allowed to persist, could this chaos have turned into some kind of popular revolution capable of registering a significant blow to the monarchy itself? "It's doubtful that domestic resistance would have posed much of an immediate threat to his authority," observes Professor Vallance. "The king had built up a sizeable army, which had already demonstrated that it could deal effectively with uprisings, as shown by the crushing defeat of Argyll's and Monmouth's rebellions in 1685."

If, in the event James ruled for longer, Parliament had been clipped and curbed, what about the country's religious make-up? "Some contemporaries believed that James's intention was to restore Roman Catholicism as the religion of the state," says Professor Vallance. "The long-term impact of having a Catholic dynasty in a Protestant country would surely have given a boost to the Catholic community in England, at the same time weakening the connection between the church and the monarchy. Even if England had not officially become a Catholic nation, there is a strong possibility that it would have ceased to be an Anglican one."

On assuming power, William quickly established a 'Grand Alliance', including England and the Dutch Republic, to

IN CONTEXT

James II and VII may have ruled for fewer than four years, but his reign marked a turbulent time, both politically and religiously. Aiming to both curb the powers of Parliament and strengthen the hand of his fellow Catholics, he encountered significant opposition from politicians and clergymen alike. This tumult was resolved by the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which saw James's removal from the throne and his replacement by his daughter Mary and her husband, William III of Orange. England was once again under Protestant rule, and the notion of the divine right of kings was punctured forever.

James II and VII receives news of the landing in Devon of his son-in-law William III of Orange, who would shortly replace him on the throne

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ABOVE: **William of Orange depicted landing in Devon. His propaganda claimed that he was defending Protestantism and English liberties, not seeking the crown**

INSET, TOP: **The attempted rebellion by the Duke of Monmouth in 1685 was crushed by James, showing he could put down domestic resistance**

firm up support in the Nine Years' War against Louis XIV's France. Had James remained on the throne, what would have been the nature of English foreign policy, particularly in relation to the French against the Protestant Dutch?

FIGHTING FRANCE

"I think the response would have been very different," says Professor Vallance, "but it would not necessarily have seen England side with the French. Louis's ambitions seemed limitless, so Catholic as well as Protestant heads of state were wary of the threat that France posed to their own interests. England staying out of the conflict at the beginning is perhaps the most likely scenario." And would the French have gained quick superiority over the Dutch without the latter receiving naval support from England? "What seems most likely is a shorter conflict, with a peace favouring the French."

Finally, had James been succeeded by his son James, Prince of Wales, the subsequent route of succession would have taken a different path, and the British throne would not have been occupied by such era-defining monarchs as George III, Victoria and Elizabeth II. "Perhaps we don't need to get too caught up in the dazzling personalities of these royals," concludes Professor Vallance. "The Glorious Revolution also bequeathed us George I and George II. The likely alternative outcome would have been the same old hereditary lottery, with some good monarchs and some bad." ⊙

"THE RAPID SWINGS OF POLITICAL FORTUNE OVER JAMES'S REIGN WERE CREATING A CHAOTIC POLITICAL SITUATION"

GET HOOKED

LISTEN
Professor Ted Vallance answers questions about the Glorious Revolution on the *HistoryExtra* podcast:
historyextra.com/glorious-revolution-qa

NEXT MONTH
What if... the 'Scramble for Africa' hadn't happened?

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7 THINGS YOU (PROBABLY) DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT TUDOR FASHION

Dr Jane Malcolm-Davies shares a selection of lesser-known tidbits about Tudor clothing – from underwear to headgear

1 FABRICS AND LAYERING REFLECTED SOCIAL STANDING

The types of material used in clothing reflected the hierarchy of Tudor society. Linen and wool were worn by all people, with the best types of wool and silk reserved for the wealthiest. In the 16th century, an ordinary woman would wear a kirtle over a linen undergarment called a smock; a wealthy woman might also wear a petticoat. A kirtle comprised top and bottom sections – a slit and laced bodice, incorporating stiff canvas for support, plus a full skirt with a front slit – fitted to each woman's measurements, with different tailors catering to rich and poor.

More affluent women displayed their wealth through layered clothing and underneath such finery as crimson silk petticoats. Men's underwear took the form of a long shirt and tightly fitted leg coverings known as hose, which was cut on the bias of the fabric to give it elasticity. By the end of the Tudor era, full-leg hose had evolved into knee-length breeches made from leather, wool or silk, depending on the individual's status and wealth.

Tudor women wore a kirtle – a combined bodice and skirt – over a smock (*above*), while men wore doublet and hose (*left*)

2 THE CODPIECE WAS THE ULTIMATE MEN'S ACCESSORY

Increasingly popular from the mid-15th century, codflaps and codpieces served a functional purpose by fastening the bias-cut hose and covering the crotch area. Gradually, they evolved into elaborate fashion statements: wealthy men flaunted codpieces adorned with ornate decoration.

Although the precise reason for their increasingly extreme protuberance is unknown, codpieces combined function with fashion, catering to both comfort and societal expectations of display. Surviving examples indicate a range of styles, from opulent to extremely simple. The popularity of codpieces ebbed by the late 16th century, but they remain intriguing artefacts, reflecting the interplay of function, culture and style during the Tudor period.

Wealthy men such as Henry VIII wore increasingly protuding and lavishly decorated codpieces

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X1, WWW.TUDORTAILOR.COM X4

ABOVE: **A leather jerkin, typical of those worn by men of the Tudor era**

RIGHT: **Queen Mary I, sporting a fashionable French hood**

3 TUDORS WORE CONVENTIONAL GARMENTS

A Tudor man wore a doublet – a type of short, padded jacket – fitted and buttoned at the front and often paired with a jerkin (another fitted torso-covering garment) or a gown for layering.

Gowns were worn for formal and special occasions and church attendance, with distinctions between best, middling and everyday wear.

Meanwhile, women's accessories – notably headwear – became surprisingly complex. The early flat linen kercher (tied headscarf) gradually acquired structure, incorporating wire at the edges to form a 'cornered kerchief'. For those of a higher social status, the French hood became very popular, made with expensive silk and interchangeable jewels and pearls. These headdresses required time to assemble, and were secured on top of laced and braided hair.

Violet remained a popular shade for clothing throughout the Tudor period

Natural 'sheep colours' were the norm when it came to Tudor clothing

4 COLOUR CHOICES WERE LIMITED BY LAW

Central to the Tudor wardrobe was an appreciation of colour, with choices typically reflecting both wealth and status. An individual might own multiple garments of the same type – a man might have three doublets, a woman three kirtles – but in different colours.

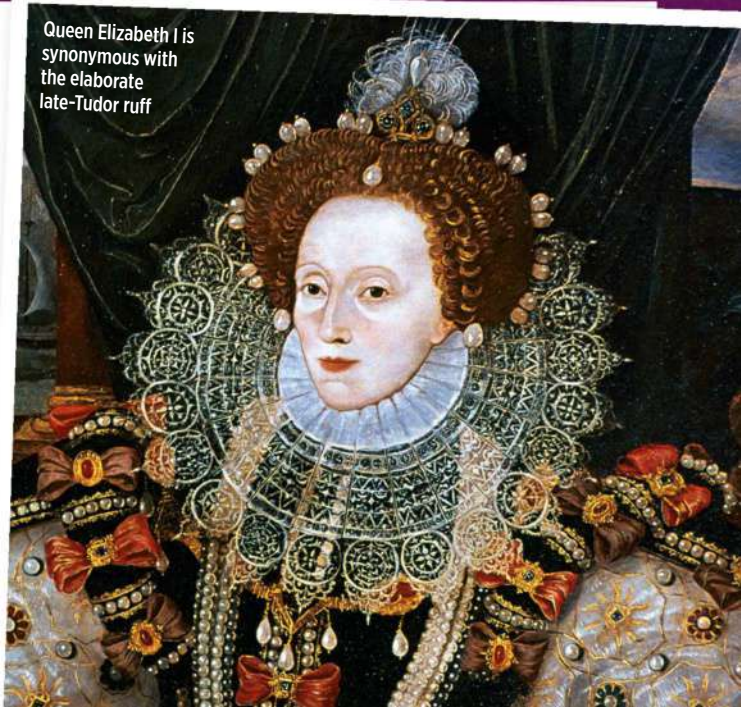
Natural, less-expensive 'sheep colours' were the norm, whereas red – produced using dyes such as madder – and tawny were pricier options. Black emerged as the most important colour in Tudor clothing. More vibrant hues – yellow, green, blue – were fashionable in the early 16th century, but diminished in popularity over time.

One notably enduring colour was violet, a less-costly alternative to purple, which was reserved mainly for royalty. Violet could be achieved by blending woad and madder, but orchil – a dye obtained from certain lichens – was the best source. Violet long remained a surprisingly popular shade for clothing for both men and women because it was close to purple, a colour long restricted to royalty by law.

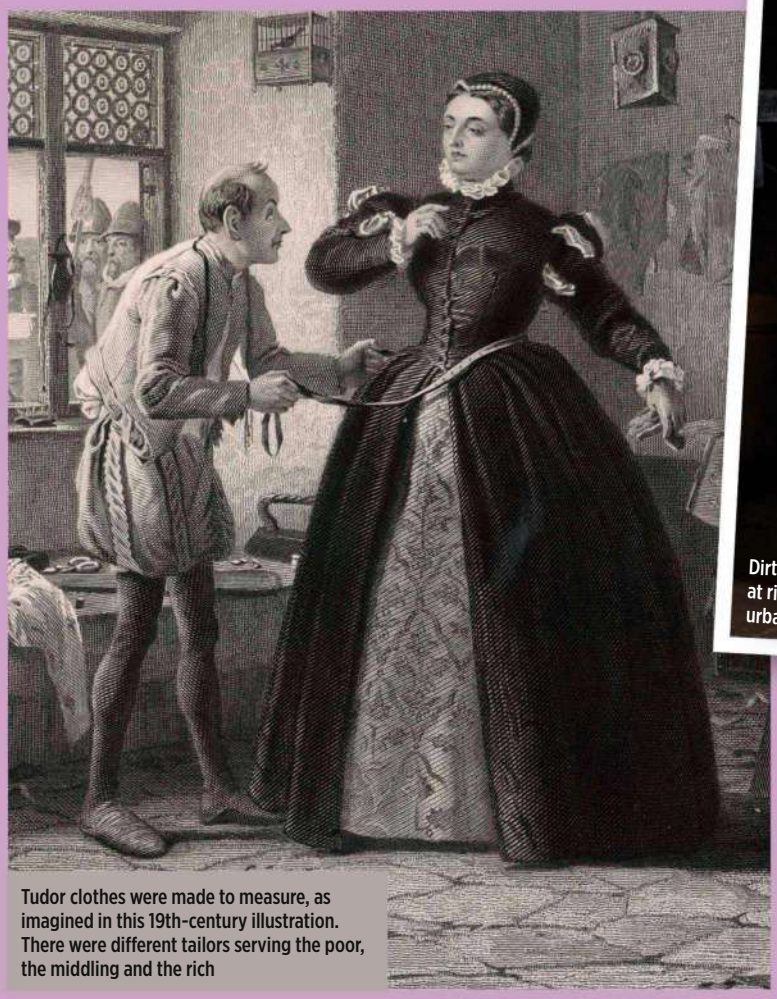
5 TUDOR FOLK WERE DEDICATED FOLLOWERS OF FASHION

Trends shifted over the course of the 16th century, notably in garments worn by the noble and middle classes. There was, for example, an evolution in the shapes of skirts, with wealthier women sporting conical, close-fitting and drum-shaped gowns as the decades progressed. Sleeves developed, too, changing from a fitted cut to elaborate, farthingale sleeves with whalebone supports. Men's attire, such as doublet and hose, also underwent alterations in shape. The most pronounced change was in neckwear, evolving from small shirt ruffles during Henry VIII's reign to the flamboyant ruffs of the Elizabethan period; and by the late 16th century, falling bands were de rigueur.

Exchange between nations also influenced trends, with royalty embracing foreign styles. Indeed, the English were teased for sporting an eclectic mix of European styles. Hybrid fashions were partly the result of thrift: those buying clothes second-hand couldn't be too picky about where they came from.



Queen Elizabeth I is synonymous with the elaborate late-Tudor ruff



Tudor clothes were made to measure, as imagined in this 19th-century illustration. There were different tailors serving the poor, the middling and the rich

6 TAILORS WERE HIGHLY RESPECTED ARTISANS

Few people crafted their own clothes, relying instead on skilled artisans to make and repair them. A prospective Tudor tailor took a seven-year apprenticeship, then developed his craft as a journeyman who travelled and trained under various master tailors to hone his skills. Master tailors excelled in cutting fabric efficiently and fitting it precisely, whereas apprentices and journeymen focused on stitching, undertaken under their mentors' supervision.

Although women often sewed household and body linen, tailors fashioned complex garments in wool and other, more luxurious, fabrics. Tailors' expertise reflected diverse needs across the social hierarchy, and some specialised in producing specific garments: for example, hosiers made hose.

This specialisation of artisans, and the apprenticeship-journeyman-master progression, was intended to assure customers they would receive service of the highest quality and professional standard from their tailors. But there are many records of complaints, with tailors being fined for poor or inappropriate work.

Clothes were made to last, and Tudor customers expected high standards from their tailors

Dirty laundry was washed at riverbanks or in designated urban washing facilities

7 PEOPLE CARED FOR THEIR CLOTHES

Tudor people took a pragmatic approach to cleanliness, aiming to increase the longevity of their clothes through targeted cleaning and care. Common sense dictated that prevention was best: table napery protected clothes during meals, and aprons were worn by both men and women for work and even on special occasions. Oversleeves, often knitted, also protected clothing from daily grime. Washerwomen worked along riverbanks or at designated washing facilities in towns. For example, Nottingham had washing stairs where flowing water enabled people to clean garments communally. Surviving 16th-century washhouses on hillsides in Italy show how the plumbing worked by gravity.

Tudors tended to care for their outer clothing in the way we care for modern winter coats: they seldom washed items made from wool, instead brushing or spot-cleaning for a quick spruce-up. Stains were removed from soiled garments by spritzing with alcohol followed by brushing. Underwear and accessories were washed frequently because having clean linen was a sign of respectability.

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

These facts were derived from an episode of the *HistoryExtra* podcast featuring historian and author Dr Jane Malcolm-Davies, associate professor at the Globe Institute, University of Copenhagen, and co-author of *The Typical Tudor: Reconstructing Everyday 16th-Century Dress* (Fat Goose Press, 2022). To stream the episode in full, scan the QR code or visit *historyextra.com/tudor-clothes-pod*

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YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO

JANE AUSTEN'S ENGLAND

Follow the author's life and literary career against the backdrop of an era marked by conflict, revolution and social change

PODCAST

Dr Lizzie Rogers answers questions about Jane Austen's England on an episode of the *HistoryExtra* podcast: historyextra.com/jane-austen-qa

24 The life and times of Jane Austen
Discover the major milestones of Austen's era with our easy-to-follow timeline

26 Everything you wanted to know about Jane Austen's England
Dr Lizzie Rogers answers questions about the changing world in which the novelist lived

30 Becoming Jane
Learn about the life events and literary figures that shaped the writer's novels

32 Fact or fiction?
Find out just how accurately Jane's books portray the rural experience, social etiquette and more

36 Waging the war against slavery
Inside the fight to abolish the transatlantic trade

38 When Britain broke ranks
How growing unrest in society and the workplace was reflected in Austen's stories

41 Age of war and revolution
Follow the series of rebellions and conflicts that flared up across the globe during Austen's lifetime

44 Opinion
Dr Lizzie Rogers discusses Austen's legacy today

45 Get hooked
Our pick of the best resources to explore next

HISTORICAL CONSULTANT FOR THIS MONTH'S ESSENTIAL GUIDE

DR LIZZIE ROGERS
is a writer and historian of the 18th and early 19th centuries, specialising in women's history and historic houses, as well as the life and works of Jane Austen.

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JANE AUSTEN

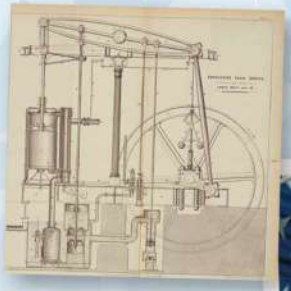
16 DEC 1775

Jane Austen is born in Steventon, Hampshire.

4 JUL 1776

Just over a year after the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War, delegates from 13 British colonies assembled in Philadelphia declare their independence from British rule and form the United States of America.

1782



The double-acting steam engine is patented by Scottish inventor James Watt.

3 SEP 1783

The American Revolutionary War concludes with the signing of the Treaty of Paris and British recognition of the independence of the United States of America.

1 JAN 1785

John Walter publishes the first edition of *The Daily Universal Register* (later renamed *The Times* in 1788) in London. Costing 2½ pennies, the broadsheet aspires to be a "faithful recorder of every species of intelligence", covering politics and trade.

1801

▶ The Austen family moves to Bath, Somerset, (*pictured right*), taking up residence at 4 Sydney Place.

The United Kingdom is formed on 1 January when the Act of Union (1800), passed by the British and Irish parliaments, comes into effect.

1803

Austen sells her novel *Susan* (later renamed *Northanger Abbey*) to publishers Crosby & Co, but they neglect to release the work.

▶ Barely a year after signing the Treaty of Amiens, Britain declares war on France, beginning the Napoleonic Wars.

1804

Napoleon Bonaparte crowns himself 'emperor of the French' at Notre-Dame Cathedral, Paris.

1804–06

The US-led Lewis and Clark Expedition explores the Louisiana Territory and the Pacific Northwest.

1805

Austen's father, George, dies in Bath. Along with her mother and sister, the author is left dependent on her brothers.

Lord Nelson is killed during the battle of Trafalgar, despite securing a major victory over Napoleon's navy.

1 MAY 1807

The slave trade is formally abolished across the British empire thanks to a campaign led by William Wilberforce (*pictured below*).

1809

After inheriting estates from wealthy relatives in Chawton, Hampshire, and Godmersham, Kent, Austen's brother Edward offers Chawton Cottage (*pictured above*) to the author rent-free. She moves in with her mother and sister.

1811

Sense and Sensibility is published. Its author is identified simply as 'A Lady'.

▶ George III is declared insane and his son George, Prince of Wales (*pictured right*) is named Prince Regent. The so-called Regency period (1811–20) is marked by a flourishing of arts and culture.

GETTY IMAGES X19, ALAMY X4

We chart the life and literary career of Jane Austen against the backdrop of a period marked by conflict, revolution and groundbreaking discoveries

WORDS: DANNY BIRD

1787

A fleet of 11 ships departs Portsmouth on 13 May, bound for the new British penal colony in Botany Bay, Australia. More than 40 of the 775 convicts on board perish in the filthy conditions en route.

c1787–93

Jane Austen writes her *juvenilia* – a set of notebooks containing stories, verses and dramatic sketches. The writings feature a coterie of outspoken (and sometimes rebellious) young women, and satirise 18th-century prose.

1789

The French Revolution begins soon after Louis XVI convenes the Estates-General (*pictured above*) at Versailles. On 14 July, the Bastille fortress is stormed by a Parisian mob.

1791

Toussaint Louverture (*below*) leads a slave revolt that overthrows French rule in Saint-Domingue (later Haiti).

1792

Writer Mary Wollstonecraft (*pictured left*) publishes *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, an important early feminist text.

1793

Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette are guillotined and Revolutionary France declares war on Britain, starting a conflict that will rage until the signing of the Treaty of Amiens in 1802.

1795

Austen pens the story *Elinor and Marianne*, an early draft of *Sense and Sensibility*.

1797

◀ Austen's first completed novel, *First Impressions* (an early version of *Pride and Prejudice*) is rejected by a publisher.

▶ Physician Edward Jenner successfully develops a vaccine against smallpox in Berkeley, Gloucestershire.

9–10 NOV 1799

Napoleon Bonaparte seizes power in France via a coup d'état and establishes a dictatorship.

1812–14

Pride and Prejudice is published in 1813, followed a year later by *Mansfield Park*.

The War of 1812 (which will last until 1815) sees fierce fighting between Britain and the US, with British troops torching the city of Washington in 1814.

1815

Emma is published. Despite her personal dislike of the royal, Austen dedicates the novel to the Prince Regent.

▶ Napoleon is defeated by an Anglo-Prussian force at Waterloo and is exiled to the mid-Atlantic island of St Helena.

1816

Austen's brother Henry buys back the unpublished manuscript of *Susan*.

The 1815 eruption of Mount Tambora, Indonesia, triggers a decline in global temperatures and leads 1816 to be dubbed the 'Year Without a Summer'.

18 JUL 1817

Austen dies aged 41 in Winchester and is buried in the city's cathedral. Although *Sanditon* is left unfinished, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* are published in December 1817, with Austen credited as an author for the very first time. ⊙

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT JANE AUSTEN'S ENGLAND

Dr Lizzie Rogers answers questions about the author and the social conventions of the world in which she lived and wrote

Q: What do we know about Jane Austen's life?

A: Jane Austen was born on 16 December 1775, the seventh of eight children born to Reverend George Austen and Cassandra Leigh Austen. The family lived in Hampshire, where George was a cleric, and Austen spent the first two to three decades of her life there. Although she and her sister, Cassandra, went to school for a while, most of their education took place at home. After her father retired in 1800, Austen spent some time in Bath, but after her father's death in 1805 until 1809, she, her mother, sister, and their friend Martha Lloyd were forced to live off the kindness of relatives, since they had little income of their own.

In 1809, Austen's brother, Edward, offered them a cottage in Chawton, Hampshire – now Jane Austen's House Museum – and it was there that she edited a lot of her early writing, including early versions of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*. Austen started publishing her work in 1811, with *Sense and Sensibility* being her first novel, but all her works were published anonymously, initially as "By a Lady" and then as "the author of [previous book]". Sadly, Jane's health started to decline, and she died on 18 July 1817, in Winchester, at the age of 41; she was buried in Winchester Cathedral.

Q: What was the Austen family's position in Regency society?

A: Austen and her family were part of what is often referred to as the 'pseudo-gentry'. While they had connections to wealthier families and established gentry, their own financial status was sometimes unstable. Austen's brother Edward was adopted by a wealthy childless couple, the Knights, who owned the Chawton estate in Hampshire, and the two sisters didn't have large marriage dowries, which were important during the Regency period. So, although the family wasn't impoverished, money was occasionally a concern. But Austen enjoyed an artistically and culturally rich life, with access to her father's extensive library of over 300 books, and she and her siblings were encouraged to read widely. Her early writings, known as her *juvenilia*, offer an interesting reflection of the society in which she mixed, with its expectations for women, concerns about financial stability, and the role of marriage as a tool for security.

ABOVE: **Mr Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet tie the knot in the BBC's 1995 adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*. Unions between different strata of the British upper class also happened in real life**

RIGHT: **An engraving depicts Jane Austen and her older sister, Cassandra, enjoying a spot of needlework**

Q: What can Austen's work tell us about Regency attitudes towards marriage?

A: Marriage during the late 18th and early 19th centuries was a complex affair. Although marriage for love was becoming more common, many married for stability, and some, especially the upper classes, married to guard their fortunes and assets, and to strengthen political alliances. In Austen's six published novels, she presents a variety of these concerns; we see romance, but it often comes with caveats. While I can't claim to know the marriage patterns of everyone during this period, it's safe to say that unions between different strata of the upper class – as with Elizabeth Bennet and Mr Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice* – did happen, albeit with much consideration given to dowries, connections, and other factors. There were also several real-life cases of people marrying between completely different

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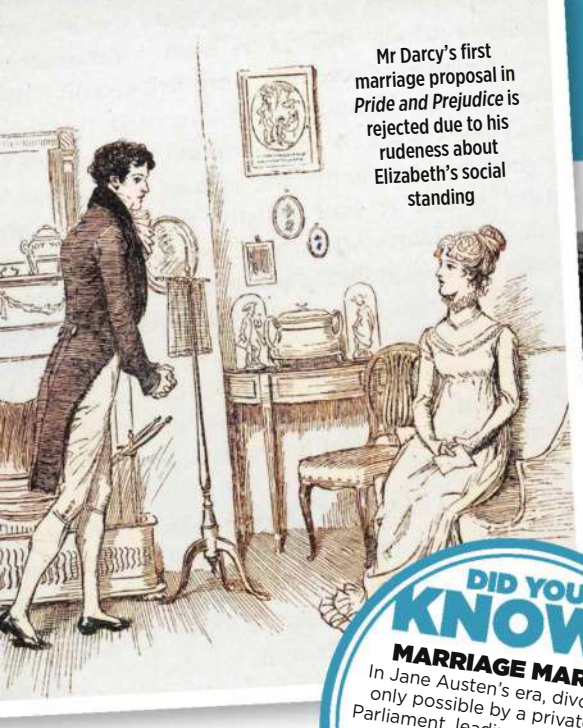


Mr Darcy's first marriage proposal in *Pride and Prejudice* is rejected due to his rudeness about Elizabeth's social standing

Blacksmith's daughter Emma Hamilton embarked on an affair and had an illegitimate child with naval hero Lord Nelson

DID YOU KNOW?

MARRIAGE MARKET

In Jane Austen's era, divorce was only possible by a private act of Parliament, leading some husbands to illegally 'sell' their wives at market. In 1815, for instance, a man in York reportedly sold his wife for 25 shillings and had her "delivered" to the buyer in a halter.

classes, including Emma Hamilton, who rose from humble beginnings to marry wealthy collector William Hamilton and then went on to have an affair with Lord Nelson. So, societal boundaries were fluid, depending on the right circumstances.

Q: In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mrs Bennet claims Mr Darcy has an income of £10,000 a year. How aware were people of others' wealth?

A: If we consider inflation alone, Mr Darcy's wealth today would be around £1m a year. But if we look at it in terms of the assets that he owned, I've seen research suggesting that his wealth would be equivalent to about £12m annually, so it's no wonder Mrs Bennet thinks that he would be a good catch for her daughters!

In general, I think people had a fair understanding of others' wealth. They may not have known all the assets someone possessed, but would have had a good idea. As demonstrated by the period drama *Bridgerton*, for instance, we can see that wealth was often discussed through scandal sheets and gossip, which would have definitely played a part in public knowledge about an individual's wealth, including the properties they claimed to own.

Furthermore, there were situations where people were *thought* to be wealthy, but were actually just managing their assets discreetly. We see this exemplified in Austen's *Persuasion*, where Sir Walter Eliot, a spendthrift, has exhausted all his funds at Kellynch Hall, forcing him to rent it out. Yet he continues to rely on his status as a baronet to maintain appearances. It's also important to note as well that a great deal of wealth was derived from land ownership at this time.

> **"Although marriage for love was becoming more common, many married for stability"**

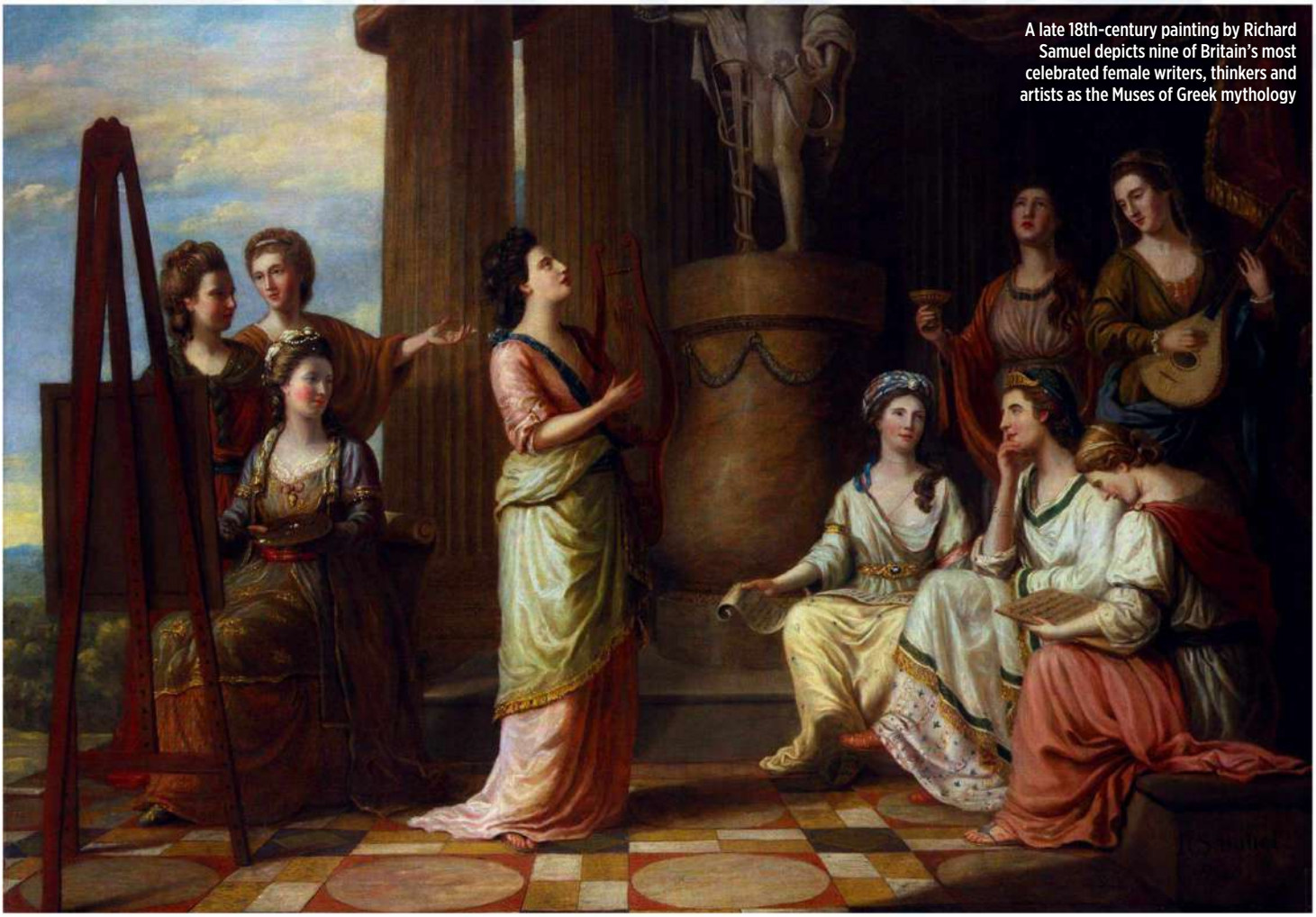
Q: What would life have been like for the lower classes in this period?

A: Austen's writing often features women in situations similar to her own – or those who are slightly more affluent – as these were the circles she was familiar with and operated within. In *Mansfield Park*, we get a brief glimpse of the lower classes through Fanny Price's family, which is significantly less well-off than the wealthy Bertrams who adopt her. Portsmouth's living conditions, particularly the Prices' overcrowded house, are a stark contrast to Austen's own environment. Similarly, in *Emma*, we meet Harriet Smith, a girl of uncertain parentage whose schooling is funded by a benefactor.

Although such glimpses are rare, they provide fascinating insights into the lives of the lower classes. And while such lives may have been more labour-intensive, there is no reason to suggest that they were any less fulfilling. In fact, women from these parts of society would have likely had more personal freedom and opportunities to earn their own income and engage in different professions. They would have also been less restricted by property-related constraints.

Q: What were women's rights like at this time?

A: Although Austen died just over a century before (some) British women got the vote in 1918, women's rights



A late 18th-century painting by Richard Samuel depicts nine of Britain's most celebrated female writers, thinkers and artists as the Muses of Greek mythology

were already under discussion. During Austen's own lifetime, we see the publication of influential works by Mary Wollstonecraft, including *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters*, the latter being published in 1787. And there was a surge of discourse about women's rights during this period, which emerged from the intellectual era known as the Enlightenment, generally regarded as spanning the 18th century.

A growing number of thinkers began to contemplate women's knowledge, their potential for learning, and their possible roles in society, and these discussions led to a variety of intriguing opinions, too numerous to encapsulate here. The crucial point, though, is the increased volume of writing focusing on women during this period. Many of these texts resonate with our contemporary understandings, which perhaps explains why figures like Wollstonecraft remain respected in the history of women's writing. Her advocacy for equality, urging women to recognise and demand equal standing, is timeless.

> "Austen's struggles with poor health may have instilled a renewed sense of purpose in her work"

Mapping Jane Austen's life against this historical backdrop makes her journey through these transformative 41 years all the more intriguing.

Q: Were female writers accepted and respected?

A: I think it largely depended on the circles in which these individuals moved, but there were several very well respected female authors during this period. As I've mentioned earlier, Mary Wollstonecraft was one, but Austen herself was also a great admirer of the satirical novelist Frances Burney – we even find Austen's name on the subscription list of one of Burney's novels – and she was also a big fan of Ann Radcliffe, who helped pioneer the genre of Gothic fiction.

It's also important to mention the 'Bluestockings' in this context – an 18th-century circle of female writers, artists and thinkers led by an aristocratic woman named Elizabeth Montagu. They received considerable acclaim, despite the inevitable controversy that sometimes surrounded women who led in such pursuits.

A testament to the recognition of the Bluestockings is a 1777 print by the English artist Richard Samuel, known as *The Nine Living Muses of Great Britain* [later recreated as a painting, shown above] which celebrates its nine female subjects for their intellectual prowess and gives us a surprisingly pleasant glimpse into contemporary attitudes towards women's achievements during this period.

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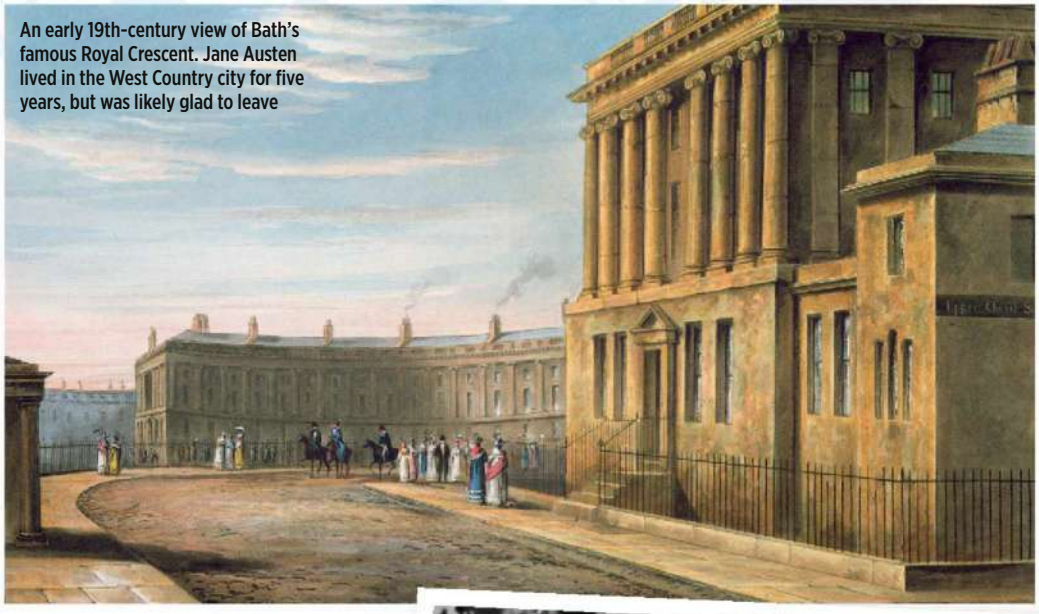

An early 19th-century view of Bath's famous Royal Crescent. Jane Austen lived in the West Country city for five years, but was likely glad to leave

LEFT: **A c1780 portrait of the novelist Frances Burney, whose work Austen greatly admired**

RIGHT: **The matriarch Mrs Bennet, seen portrayed here by Mary Boland in the 1940 film adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice*, is prone to 'nerves'**

Q: It's been suggested that, in *Persuasion*, Anne Elliot's negative opinion of Bath reflects Austen's own views on the city. Is this the case?

A: Today, Bath is most commonly associated with the Romans – and Jane Austen. However, considering her lack of literary output during her time there, it's clear that Austen's stay in Bath was a period of highs and lows.

Austen's time in Bath followed 25 years of happiness in Steventon, and it was during her stay in the city that her father passed away. She likely had a complex relationship with the city, primarily because it was the backdrop for some of her life's most significant sorrows and, as a creative individual, the marked decrease in her literary output whilst in Bath serves as a telling indicator of her state of mind.

Q: What impact did Austen's ill-health have on her writing?

A: Ill-health and consequent periods of confinement meant that Austen likely had ample time to write, and I believe – though this is merely speculation on my part – that her struggles with poor health might well have instilled in her a renewed sense of purpose and determination in her work.

It's commonly believed that Austen had Addison's disease [a rare disorder of the adrenal glands], a condition that is now considerably more treatable and manageable. Back then, however, without a proper diagnosis, her health challenges remained largely a mystery. This may have given her a heightened awareness of her aspirations and what she wanted to achieve, while at the same time making her conscious of her physical limitations.

Interestingly, we find instances of illness, often with a comedic twist, in her novels as well. The depiction of Mrs Bennet with her dramatic bouts of ill heath, nerves and hypochondria come to mind, suggesting that Austen managed to retain a sense of positivity despite her personal struggles.

INTERVIEW: LAUREN GOOD

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DR LIZZIE ROGERS is a writer and historian of the 18th and early 19th centuries, specialising in women's history and historic houses, as well as Jane Austen

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To hear Dr Lizzie Rogers answer questions about Jane Austen's England on the *HistoryExtra* podcast, scan the QR code or visit *historyextra.com/jane-austen-qa*

BECOMING JANE

At first glance, Jane Austen's life seems to have been uneventful – but those initial appearances are somewhat deceptive

On 16 December 1816, her 41st birthday, Jane Austen wrote a letter to her nephew, James Edward Austen-Leigh. Edward, as he was known, had recently gone to study at Oxford. Perhaps gently poking fun at Edward, a budding novelist, she wrote of his "strong, manly, spirited Sketches, full of variety and Glow".

Discussing her own work, she asked modestly: "How could I possibly join them on to the little bit (two inches wide) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a Brush, as produces little effect after much Labour?" Austen was comparing herself to a miniaturist, painting tiny portraits.

The letter, held at the British Library, is one of about 160 by Jane Austen to have survived. It is significant because it's rare and, more subtly, because it seems to confirm what we think we know about Austen. Here is the spinster chronicler of the domestic, a writer who famously saw no need to directly reference the Napoleonic Wars (1803–15) in her fiction.

Yet this sketch, suggesting someone living a modest life, is at best only a partial picture. In her own lifetime, Austen was a successful novelist. Although she never married, she was part of a large family. In *A Memoir of Jane Austen* (1869), Edward describes her as "the delight of all her nephews and nieces". She was also someone whose place in society – essentially that of the poor relation – meant that she observed the English landed gentry up close without the sense of security and status enjoyed by those who inherited or married money.

CULTURAL CAPITAL

Jane was born in 1775, in Steventon, Hampshire, where her father, George (1731–1805), was the rector. Though the Reverend Austen's family had made money as wool merchants, George's branch weren't well off. In 1764, he married Cassandra Leigh (1739–1827), whose father was a fellow at All Souls College, Oxford.

From 1768 until the turn of the century, the Austens lived in Steventon's rectory. Jane had six brothers and a beloved older sister, Cassandra (1773–1845). George supplemented his modest clerical income by farming and teaching.

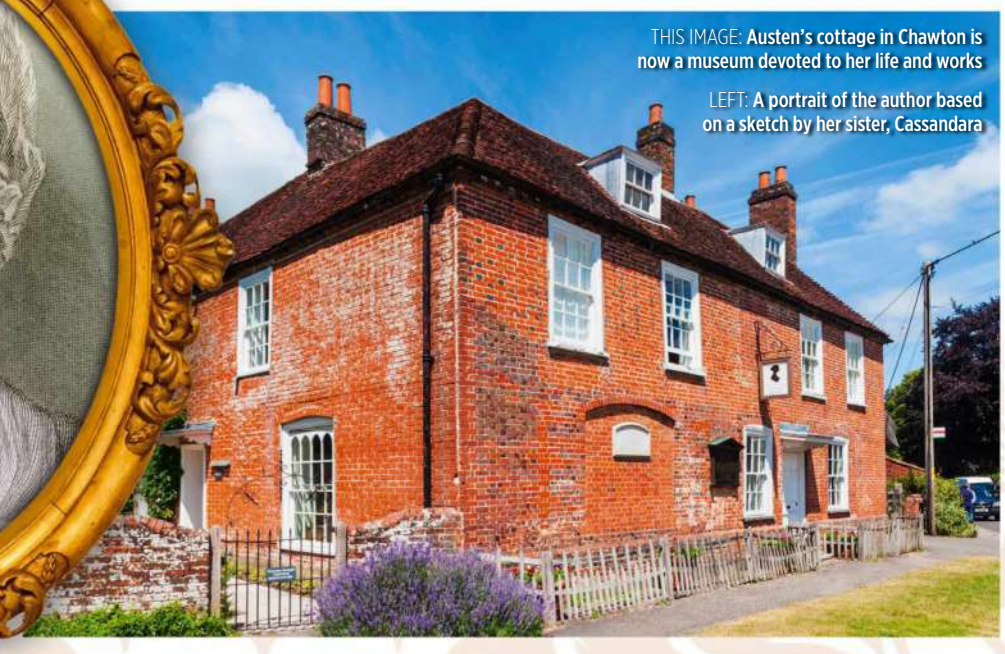
Though money was perennially tight, the Austens – a close and warm family – had cultural capital aplenty. Ideas were discussed freely in a home that often welcomed visitors from the wider world. Well educated by the standards of her time, Jane was able to access her father's library and that of a family friend, colonial administrator Warren Hastings (1732–1818). In addition, family and friends staged plays.

From a young age, Jane wrote poems, plays and stories, often with the kind of satirical edge familiar from her novels. It was an apprenticeship for a professional writing career that began in earnest around 1795, though it was not until

DID YOU KNOW?

UNFINISHED SYMPATHY

Jane Austen's part-completed 1817 novel *Sanditon* is well known as the source for a 2019 television drama. But in 1803, while living in Bath, she also wrote some 7,500 words of *The Watsons*, tinged with social realism – perhaps reflecting her dislike of the city.



THIS IMAGE: **Austen's cottage in Chawton is now a museum devoted to her life and works**

LEFT: **A portrait of the author based on a sketch by her sister, Cassandra**

GETTY IMAGES X 4, ALAMY X5

ABOVE: **The only known portrait of Austen's elder sister, Cassandra**

THIS IMAGE: **A trustee of the Jane Austen House Museum uses a magnifying glass to analyse one of the author's letters**

> **"Jane observed the English landed gentry up close without a sense of security and status"**

1811 that one of her novels, *Sense and Sensibility*, made it into print.

Jane never married, though she was attracted to Tom Lefroy (1776–1889), a dashing and intelligent trainee barrister from Ireland. Marriage between the pair was impossible, because neither had any money. In 1802, Jane briefly accepted a proposal from Harris Bigg-Wither, the charmless heir to extensive estates, but immediately regretted her decision and recanted her acceptance. In their different ways, both of these men appear to correspond to Austen archetypes.

ERA OF UNCERTAINTY

In 1800, George unexpectedly decided to retire from the church, heralding an period of uncertainty in Jane's life. The following year, the Austen family moved to Bath, where George and Cassandra had married. In 1805, George died, which left Jane, her sister and their mother in a precarious financial position. Cassandra later destroyed a cache of Jane's letters from this period, which suggests it was a difficult time.

In 1809, after a period living in Southampton, the Austen women at last began to enjoy a more settled life again. They moved to Chawton, Hampshire, where Jane's brother Edward gifted them the use of a cottage after he inherited the Elizabethan country pile Chawton House from a childless cousin, Thomas Knight.

Jane's literary life came fully into focus in Chawton, though her books were initially published anonymously, as was common in this period. But then, in 1816, just as her career began building momentum following the publication of *Emma* (1815), Jane fell ill. She died in July 1817, possibly from Addison's disease or Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Since 1833, Jane Austen's novels have never been out of print. But why are they so popular? One answer may lie in the idea that Jane wrote about marriage, money, status and family not because these were small themes but because, for women of her class, these represented huge forces shaping their lives. Think of her less as a miniaturist, more as a supremely gifted writer who focused on the most revealing details.

WORDS: JONATHAN WRIGHT

AUSTEN'S LITERARY CONTEMPORARIES

We look at four fellow writers of the 18th and early 19th centuries who proved influential in Jane's life and work

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT (1759–97)

Whereas Austen subtly chronicled women's lives, Mary Wollstonecraft (novelist Mary Shelley's mother) railed at the patriarchy. In *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792), she argued that women were not – as many men rather conveniently supposed – inherently inferior to men, but were denied education and opportunities.

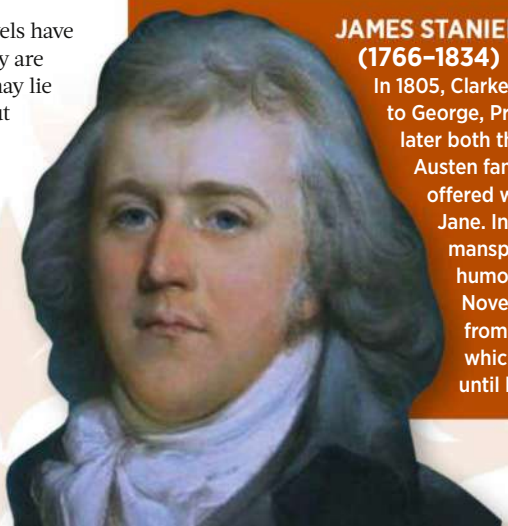
ANN RADCLIFFE (1764–1823)

The Gothic stories penned by Radcliffe, the most popular novelist of her era, were dark romances. Austen satirised Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) in the posthumously published *Northanger Abbey* (1817). This probably affected Radcliffe's reputation, which has recovered in recent years as scholars have reassessed her work.

SIR WALTER SCOTT (1771–1832)

A towering literary figure in his day, Scott's well-known novels include *Waverley* (1814), *Rob Roy* (1817) and *Ivanhoe* (1819). Though his own work was widescreen and romantic, he was a huge admirer of Austen's fiction – and, as is clear in both of their writings, the feeling was mutual.

JAMES STANIER CLARKE (1766–1834)



In 1805, Clarke became librarian to George, Prince of Wales, later both the monarch and an Austen fanboy. Clarke helpfully offered writing advice to Jane. In response to his mansplaining, she wrote a humorous essay, 'Plan of a Novel, according To Hints from Various Quarters', which wasn't published until long after her death.

AUSTEN'S ENGLAND: FACT OR FICTION?

Jane Austen's novels provide a fascinating picture of Georgian life – but how accurate are her portrayals? Historian and author **Helen Amy** considers rural life, social etiquette and more...

There are two good reasons to expect the novels of Jane Austen to be factually accurate. First, Austen wrote only about what she knew and what was probable, for fear of giving "false representations". She drew directly from her own experience and observations of the people around her, and her works are full of the groups and types of people with whom she was familiar. Second, Austen was concerned about detail and accuracy. She did not, for example, describe men alone because she did not know how they talked without a woman present.

However, it's important to remember that Austen was first and foremost a novelist, and creative considerations sometimes overrode factual accuracy. Her novels are works of art in which her considerable imaginative powers played a large part. Furthermore, due to her narrow focus on the lives of a few families in country villages, and because she wrote from a woman's viewpoint, she provides an incomplete picture. Austen gives no real idea of the lives of men, and little insight into life beyond the affluent parts of mostly rural, southern England.

The wider backdrop to the novels is well depicted. England is accurately shown as a hierarchical and patriarchal society in which everyone knows their place and in which women are considered second-class citizens, largely confined to the private domestic sphere. Men run the country, public institutions and the professions, and they own the land. The authenticity of the world Austen presents is also enhanced by rounded and convincing characters.

ABOVE: **A copy of a painting that may show Jane Austen as a girl**

LEFT: **The frontispiece of an 1882 edition of *Emma*. Austen's depiction of rural life in the novel is somewhat misleading**

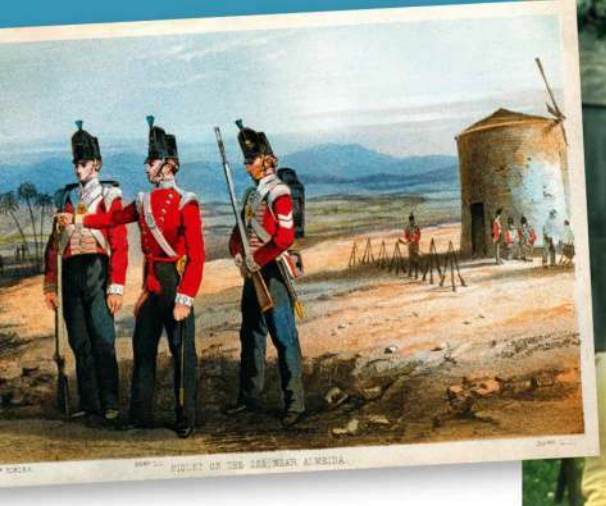
RIGHT: **Fanny Price (Frances O'Connor) with her mother (Lindsay Duncan) in the 1999 film adaptation of *Mansfield Park* – a novel that features depictions of urban poverty**

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X4

COUNTRY LIVING

Existence in rural England is portrayed realistically in all of Austen's novels – except *Emma*. In that book, the "large and populous village" of Highbury is self-sufficient and somewhat introspective, enjoying little contact with the outside world. All of the action takes place in and around Highbury, and only two of the characters ever travel beyond it. Although this picture was partly correct, it does not convey the fact that, at the time in which *Emma* was set, better-off people were beginning to travel outside their communities, taking advantage of improvements in transport. In the other novels, characters more realistically travel to Bath, London and other places.

Austen's picture of rural life can also be considered incomplete in that it barely features the lower classes, apart from Emma's occasional contact with poorer



people. In fact, the more affluent classes frequently encountered and helped the poor in their communities.

A common (and fair) criticism of Austen's works is that they depict a sanitised world, ignoring unpleasant subjects such as poverty and crime. The probable explanation for this unbalanced view is Austen's refusal, as she expressed in *Mansfield Park*, to "dwell on guilt and misery". She preferred to concentrate on the pleasant and positive aspects of life, in keeping with her optimistic and cheerful personality. However, also in *Mansfield Park*, Austen was compelled by her plot to describe urban poverty in the scenes set in the chaotic home of the Price family.

It has been suggested, too, that Austen unrealistically ignores current affairs and political events. For example, there is little reference to the wars in which England was engaged, apart from the presence of the militia in *Pride and Prejudice* – a reminder of the threat of invasion by Napoleonic France – and the naval characters in *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion*. However, this reflects reality: the tranquil countryside remained largely undisturbed by these events, because few families in those areas were directly involved.

ABOVE LEFT: **British soldiers in Portugal during the Peninsular War (1807–14) – a conflict that is never explicitly mentioned in Austen's novels**

ABOVE RIGHT: **The rural Dashwood family depicted in the 1995 film adaptation of *Sense and Sensibility***

RIGHT: **Another still from the adaptation shows the characters of Sir John Middleton (Robert Hardy) and Mrs Jennings (Elizabeth Spriggs) – portrayed as belonging to an affluent London elite**

"A common criticism of Austen's works is that they ignore unpleasant subjects such as poverty and crime"

Despite these limitations, Austen's fictional locations are so realistic that some readers have identified them with real places. Highbury has been identified with Dorking and Leatherhead in Surrey, while Meryton has been matched with Ware in Hertfordshire. It is, however, likely that Austen incorporated features of several real places in her descriptions of her fictional locations; she said that she wished "to create, not to reproduce".

CORRUPT AND THREATENING?

London, a place that Jane Austen knew well, features in four of her novels. The fashionable, elegant areas home to characters such as Mrs Jennings and the Middletons in *Sense and Sensibility* are well drawn. The affluent classes are realistically described paying visits, attending social events and enjoying the capital's attractions – as Austen did herself on her visits there. However, London is also shown, again realistically, in a more negative light. In *Mansfield Park*, for example, the British capital is portrayed a place of dissolution and vice where the pleasure-loving Crawfords are morally tainted.

The author's novels accurately show London as a place of extremes, where beauty and elegance contrasted with poverty, ugliness and squalor. Austen herself had ambivalent feelings about the capital – she enjoyed its beauty and culture but also, like most country dwellers, viewed it as a corrupt and threatening place.

DID YOU KNOW?

SICK NOTES

In *Sense and Sensibility*, Marianne Dashwood becomes very ill with "putrid fever", or typhus – as did Jane Austen and her sister, Cassandra, when they were girls boarding with their tutor, Mrs Cawley. Today, typhus can be treated with antibiotics.

THIS IMAGE: **The picturesque city of Bath was Austen's home for five years – but it wasn't always a happy place for her**

RIGHT: **Dancers in Bath's Upper Rooms, in an illustration for *Northanger Abbey***

◀ Austen captures the lively atmosphere of Bath at the turn of the 19th century, when it bustled with wealthy people who went there for their health and for pleasure. The author's topographical knowledge of Bath is evident in *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, in which scenes are set in real places, adding to the novels' authenticity.

However, Austen's own negative feelings about Bath can be detected when she describes Anne Elliot's emotions in *Persuasion*. Anne's sense of impending doom and imprisonment on arriving there reflect the author's own experiences. Austen was never entirely happy during her time in Bath, and she was relieved to leave the city in 1806, though her negativity was probably not shared by the many people who were attracted to this popular spa town.

WOMEN'S LIVES

The novels' heroines each undergo a journey of self-discovery and overcome various difficulties before marrying the man who is right for them. As Austen tells their stories, she paints a realistic picture of women's lives in this period.

Her female characters are accurately portrayed as economically dependent, second-class citizens whose lives revolve around home and family. Most have received the limited education prescribed for females, which comprised basic literacy skills, ornamental accomplishments and instruction in manners. The main objective of this education was to attract a husband and reinforce the soft feminine qualities admired by men. This was the education provided at Mrs Goddard's school in *Emma*, where girls were sent to "scramble themselves into a little education, without any danger of coming back prodigies".

In the characters of Elizabeth Bennet (*Pride and Prejudice*) and Fanny Price (*Mansfield Park*), Austen shows how, by self-education, some women learned to think for themselves and fight back against their subjection. Elizabeth and Fanny both reject the unsuitable men their families want them to marry, and go on to win the men they love.

This depiction of female education does not, however, reflect changes occurring at this time, including a move towards academic study. In fact, a few women of the period, like the feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft, for instance, were fighting for better education and improved rights for women.

The novels accurately reveal how women (unless they were financially independent) often had only one real ambition: to marry – and, preferably, marry well. Marriage was the only way for them to obtain independence from their parents and to gain their own home along with some status and respect, and to avoid the stigma of 'spinsterhood'.

Austen convincingly shows this pressure on women, especially those with little or no dowry. The Bennet sisters of *Pride and Prejudice* fall into this category, which explains their mother's desperation to marry them off. These women needed compensating qualities – being beautiful or highly accomplished – to make up for their lack of a dowry. Fortunately, Jane and Elizabeth Bennet

Marriage was the main goal of young women like Elizabeth Bennet – seen portrayed here by Jennifer Ehle in the 1995 BBC version of *Pride and Prejudice*

DID YOU KNOW?

SWEET TRUTH

Jane Austen describes various foods and feasts in her novels, not least the extravagant dinner served by Mrs Bennet to impress Bingley and Darcy in *Pride and Prejudice*. Jane herself enjoyed cakes and buttered sweet, brioche-like Bath buns.

Young women without substantial dowries, like the Bennet sisters in *Pride and Prejudice* (depicted here with Mrs Bennet in the 2005 film adaptation), hoped that their beauty or artistic accomplishments might attract potential suitors instead

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X4

ABOVE: **The "ill-bred" Mrs Elton in *Emma* (portrayed here by Tanya Reynolds in a 2020 film adaptation) breaks accepted rules governing etiquette**

RIGHT: **The kind Mr Knightley in *Emma* is the archetypal "perfect gentleman"**

have the beauty and character necessary to attract highly eligible men.

In contrast, *Pride and Prejudice*'s Charlotte Lucas – who is 'on the shelf' at the age of 27 and lacks any compensatory qualities – pursues the rejected Mr Collins. She takes a risk to acquire "the comfortable home", she wants, and is prepared to put up with the "irksome" clergyman to get it. Similarly, in *Mansfield Park*, Maria Bertram – despite her ample dowry – marries a man she does not love to acquire the house and worldly things she desires.

Elsewhere, Austen realistically depicts the plight of old maids in the character of Miss Bates in *Emma*. Although she is a cheerful and kindly person, Miss Bates is an object of ridicule and pity. Austen also correctly points out that it was only poor spinsters who were treated badly; wealthy spinsters were quite acceptable.

Most of Austen's female characters lead rather empty and self-indulgent lives, spending their considerable spare time gossiping, shopping, socialising and enjoying the pleasures of Bath and the seaside. In reality, though, many women spent their time usefully, with pastimes including reading, writing, sewing, painting and music when not occupied with family responsibilities and philanthropic work, little of which is adequately conveyed in the novels.

Austen used her intimate knowledge of country house life when creating the homes of her upper-class characters, but her depictions, especially in *Mansfield Park*, are not always typical of the time. The Bertrams enjoy "all the comforts and consequences of a handsome house and large income". However, the portrayal of Lady Bertram is a good example of how Austen's writing doesn't present a complete picture of a typical country house mistress, nor of life in the grand country houses of the period. Lady Bertram is too lazy to fulfil her duties properly: she does not entertain; she is not involved in the life of the local community; and she does not find her daughters suitable husbands.

Less-wealthy spinsters, like the character of Miss Bates in *Emma*, were seen as objects of ridicule

CODES OF CONDUCT

The novels include plenty of evidence of the codes of conduct that governed polite society. Elizabeth Bennet is criticised for her "conceited independence" and "self-sufficiency" – unacceptable in a woman – while the improper behaviour of some members of her family at first deters Darcy from proposing to Elizabeth.

> **"Most of Austen's female characters lead empty and self-indulgent lives"**

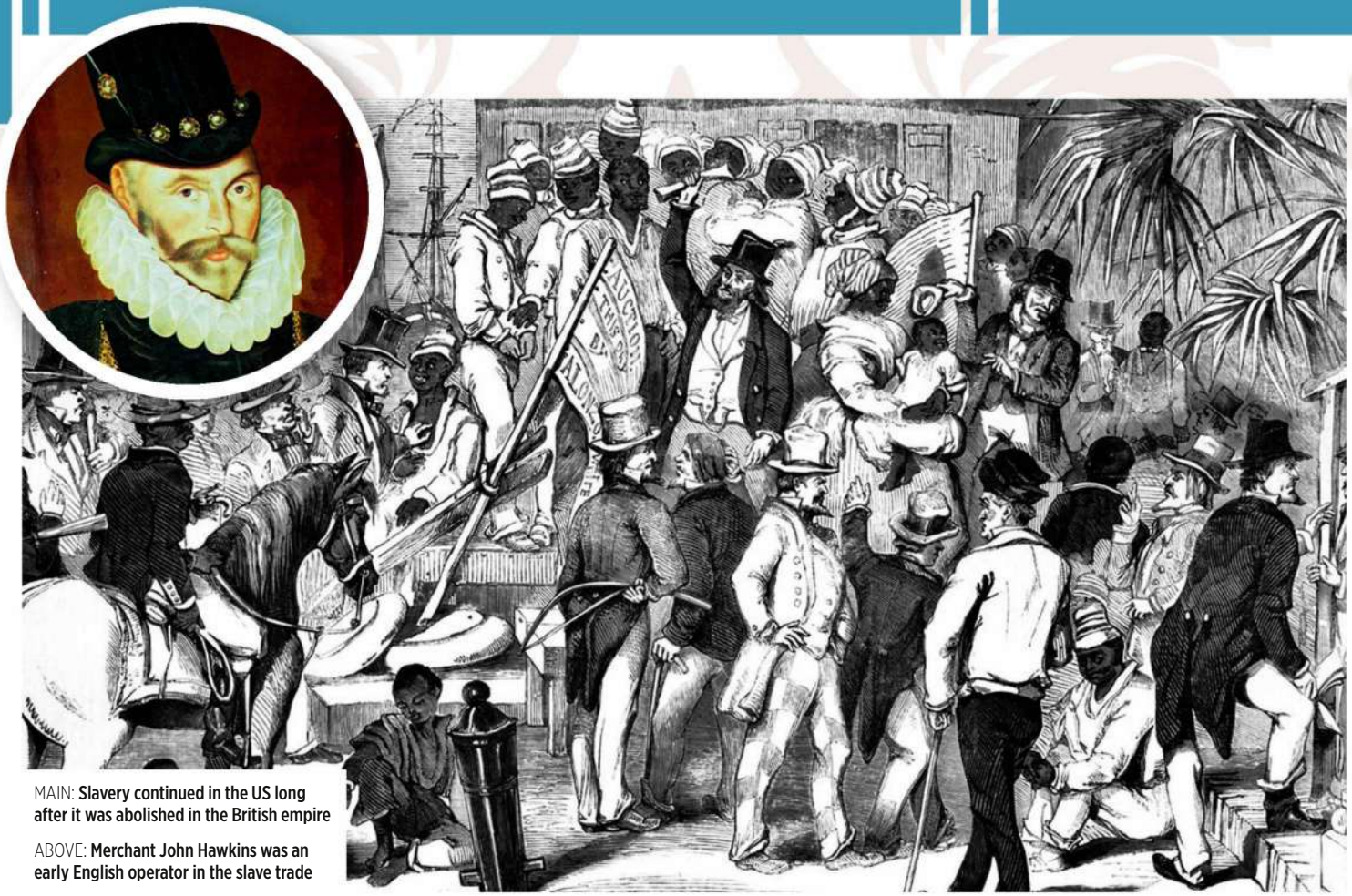
The severe consequences of breaking society's rules, and the double standards applied to men and women, can be found in Austen's writing. In *Mansfield Park*, Maria Bertram is banished from society for running off with Henry Crawford, while he escapes punishment. This reflects the belief – an absurd double standard – that the female sex was 'morally superior', so any fall from grace by a woman was more serious.

Austen's gentry characters are distinguished by their good manners and correct behaviour. Two such women who break the rules governing behaviour and etiquette are Mrs Elton in *Emma* and Lucy Steele in *Sense and Sensibility*. The "ill-bred" Mrs Elton is loud, rude, overbearing and boastful, while Lucy shows her poor breeding by discussing her personal affairs with Elinor Dashwood, whom she hardly knows, and by using bad grammar.

As for the men, Austen portrays the "perfect gentleman" in the character of Mr Knightley in *Emma*: he is kind, considerate and attentive to everyone – unlike Mr Darcy, who does not always behave like a true gentleman.

So how much of the novels is fact and how much is fiction? The background depiction of England is largely accurate, and a good representation of the society in which Jane Austen lived and set her novels. However, when she narrows her focus onto what she described as "the little bit (two inches) of ivory on which I work", her picture is not always complete, and factual accuracy is sometimes sacrificed to creative considerations. Nevertheless, in her combination of fact and fiction, Jane Austen presents a fascinating impression of England in the late Georgian and Regency periods.

HELEN AMY is an author and historian. Her books include *Jane Austen's England* (Amberley Publishing, 2017) and the forthcoming *Jane Austen's Men*, due for publication in April 2024



MAIN: **Slavery continued in the US long after it was abolished in the British empire**

ABOVE: **Merchant John Hawkins was an early English operator in the slave trade**

WAGING THE WAR AGAINST SLAVERY

Dr Lizzie Rogers examines the impact of the abolitionist cause on the age in which Jane Austen and her family lived

In October 1562, English merchant John Hawkins set sail from Plymouth for the West African coast. Having heard of the great profits to be made from capturing people there and selling them in the Caribbean, he filled his ships with enslaved Africans – and became the first known Briton to profit from the transatlantic slave trade. Over the following three centuries, some 12 million Africans were forcibly transported.

During Jane Austen's lifetime, abolition and slavery became an incredibly important moral, political and social issue, intertwined with various aspects of life in Britain. Indeed, her father, Reverend George Austen, was co-trustee of a marriage settlement that included a responsibility for dispersing the property of a plantation and its profits.

Austen's novels feature several allusions to slavery. In *Mansfield Park*, the wealthy Bertram family owns estates in Antigua, and the name of the titular country house is a nod to the first Earl of Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice from 1756 to 1788. He ruled in significant cases that helped promote the notion of the illegality of slavery in England. In 1772, he ruled that it was unlawful for Charles Stewart, who had purchased an African named James Somerset in Virginia and then brought him to England, to forcibly deport that man to slavery in the Americas. Somerset's lawyer was Granville Sharp, an influential anti-slavery campaigner and scholar. Such rulings bolstered the abolition movement in a period marked by uprisings by enslaved people, such as the Haitian Revolution led by Toussaint L'Ouverture from 1791 to 1804, and the dynamic actions of campaigners such as Sharp.

FORCES FOR GOOD

Perhaps the best-known abolitionist was William Wilberforce, MP for Hull, who in 1787 began campaigning for the cause in Parliament. He was influenced by the writings of Thomas Clarkson, a prolific protester who travelled widely to gather information about the slave

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trade, and who undertook speaking tours to promote the abolitionist cause. In 1808, he published *The History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade by the British Parliament*. Jane Austen remarked in an 1813 letter to her sister Cassandra that she was "much in love" with Clarkson's writing. Their brother Henry was a delegate at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Conference in London, where he saw Clarkson speak.

THE POWER OF THE WORD

Writings and personal accounts were hugely important in circulating the messages of the anti-slavery movement. Olaudah Equiano accompanied his 1789 autobiography with lectures and tours, and included in his book a petition addressed to Queen Charlotte. Similarly, Ottobah Cugoano's 1787 book *Narrative of the Enslavement of a Native of Africa* was presented to the Prince of Wales, later George IV. Some of William Cowper's anti-slavery poetry was included in a pamphlet called *A Subject for Conversation at the Tea-table*, which was printed and distributed widely, bringing the issues of slavery and abolition into the home.

One interesting tactic used in the campaigns for the abolition of slavery and the trade in enslaved people was to aim rhetoric and information at housewives. Why? Because they controlled the domestic space that would in most cases almost certainly have contained products of enslaved labour, including tea, coffee and sugar. If significant numbers of such women – and others in their families – boycotted these items, it would dramatically reduce the profitability of plantations worked by enslaved people.

The first sugar boycott – during which participants stopped buying sugar produced in the West Indies – was staged in the late 18th century. The idea became bound up with Quaker protests against slavery on both sides of the Atlantic, and was one of the tactics used by the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, founded in 1787.

One of that society's early members was Josiah Wedgwood, whose company produced ceramics sporting designs supporting the abolition of slavery. Wedgwood and his family also refused to use West Indian sugar at their home, Etruria Hall in Staffordshire. It is estimated that just under half a million British people abstained from West Indian sugar during the first boycott in 1791.

In Austen's unfinished novel, *Sanditon*, she introduces her first black character:

Enslaved people labour on a West Indian sugar plantation. From the late 18th century, widespread sugar boycotts helped further the abolitionist cause

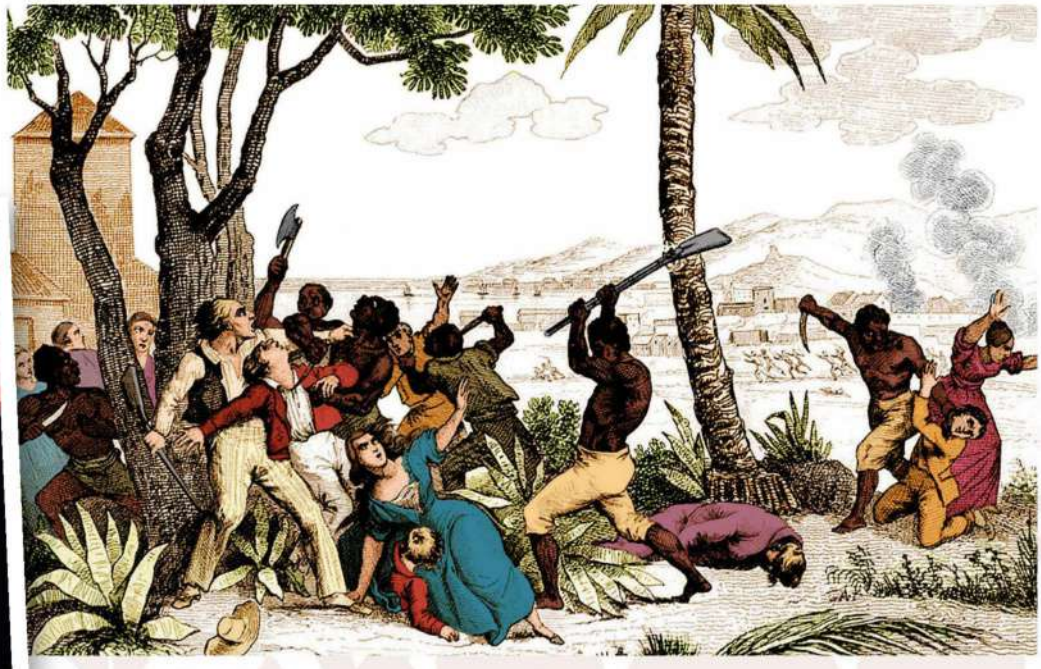
> **"Boycotting sugar could reduce the profitability of plantations worked by enslaved people"**

Miss Lambe, daughter of a plantation owner and an enslaved woman, and an heiress to her father's estates in the West Indies. In the television adaptation of *Sanditon*, the first series of which aired in 2019, Miss Lambe's character leads a boycott of West Indian sugar in the titular seaside town – echoing the real consumer boycott that was staged as a protest against slavery.

BOYCOTT TO BREAKTHROUGH

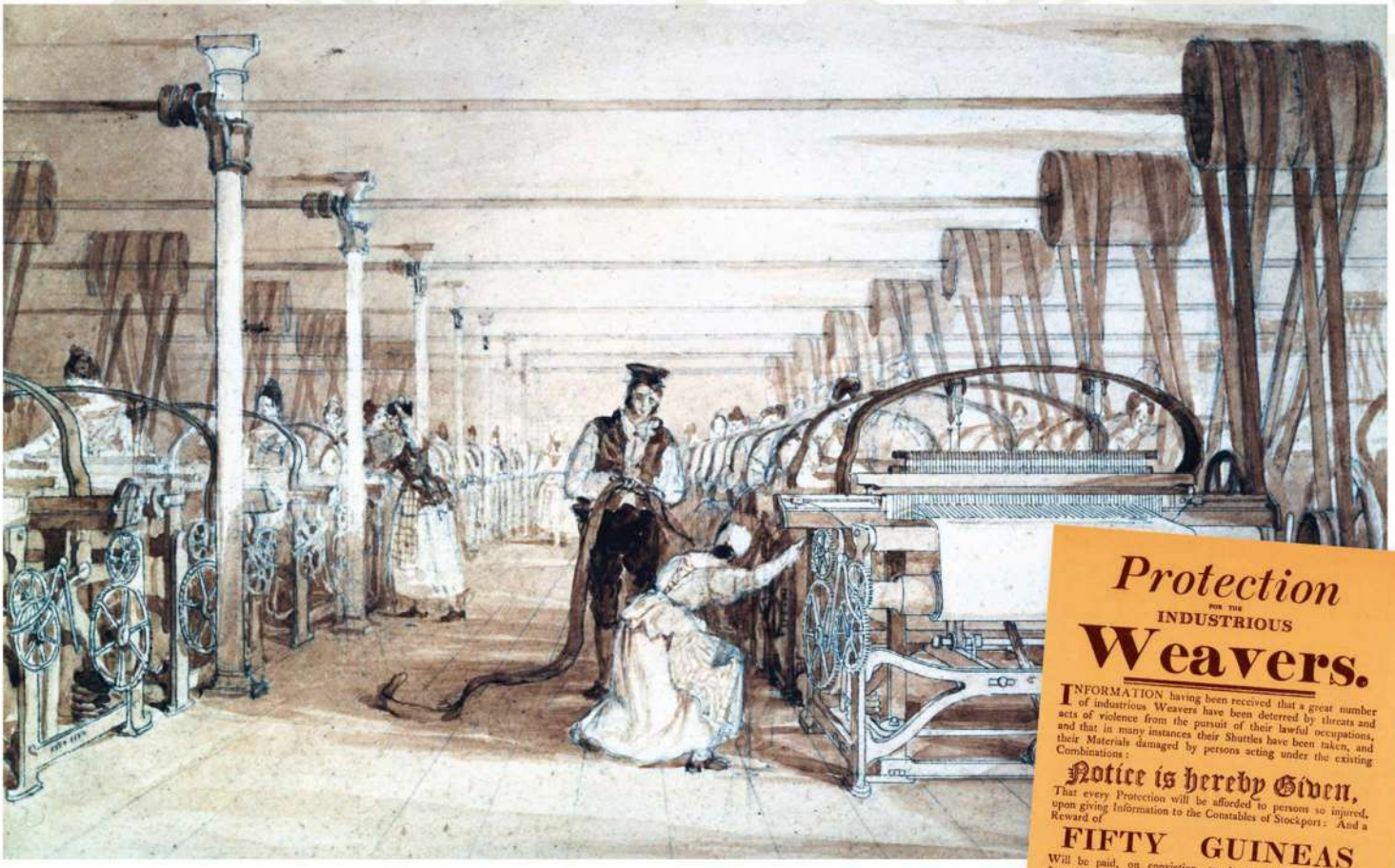
In the early 19th century, the issue of West Indian sugar was again brought to wider public attention by Quaker abolitionist campaigner Elizabeth Heyrick. A founding member of the Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society in Birmingham – along with Sarah Wedgwood, daughter of Josiah – she led a boycott in Leicester. Heyrick was ardent in her desire for an immediate end to slavery, rather than gradual emancipation; sadly, she passed away in 1831, before she could see this breakthrough enshrined in law.

The Slavery Abolition Act came into force in Britain in 1834. Conditions for those formerly enslaved did not improve overnight – and some continued to work on British-owned land overseas – but it was an important turning point in the fight for an end to slavery.



ABOVE: **Enslaved people in Saint-Domingue (Haiti) rose up against French colonial rule and launched a revolution in 1791**
LEFT: **Abolitionist William Wilberforce began campaigning in 1787 – 20 years later, the slave trade was banned in the British empire**

DR LIZZIE ROGERS is a writer and historian of the 18th and early 19th centuries, specialising in women's history and historic houses, as well as the life and times of Jane Austen



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TWENTY GUINEAS

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Stockport, June 17th, 1808. PETER BROWN, T. CARTWRIGHT, } CONSTABLES.

By the 22nd, Geo. 3, C. 40, S. 3.

"It is enacted," That if any person enter, by force, into any House or Shop, with intent to Cut and Destroy any Linen or Cotton, or Linen and Cotton mixed with any other Materials, in the Loom, or any Warp or Shute. Tools, Tackle, and Utensils, for Weaving, Preparing, or Making any such Manufactures, every such Offender shall be guilty of FELONY, without Benefit of Clergy".

J. CLARKE, PRINTER.

WHEN BRITAIN BROKE RANKS

Beneath the genteel surface of decorous society, unrest simmered in the world – and works – of Jane Austen

While the novels of Jane Austen might suggest an endless schedule of middle- and upper-class gaiety, disgruntlement was rumbling beneath the surface across the country – and, during this tail end of the Georgian era, it often erupted in violent, sometimes lethal protest. Not that Austen herself completely ignored what was happening in the country beyond Barton Cottage and Netherfield Park.

For instance, her fifth novel, *Northanger Abbey*, refers to the unrest erupting in England's larger cities. Although she writes about a riot as imagined by one of the characters, the rather visceral description depicts: "a mob of three thousand men assembling in St George's Fields, the Bank attacked, the Tower threatened, the streets of London flowing with blood". Whether real or imagined, Austen's inspiration for this tableau does seem to have come from real-life events. The episode appears to be a conflation of at least two separate disturbances that occurred prior to *Northanger Abbey*'s publication.

In 1808, perhaps 6,000 weavers from the local – and rapidly growing – textile industry in Manchester gathered in St George's Fields to protest about the lack of a minimum wage in their trade. Eight years later, not long before Austen's novel was published, another riot broke out in London at the end of a hitherto peaceful protest. During the violence, the rioters even planned to attack the Tower of London – so it was surely not mere coincidence that Austen's imagined account of the unrest included the Tower being "threatened".

TOP: **Employees operate power looms at a cotton mill in Lancashire. Thousands of the county's textile workers rioted in a bid to securer fairer pay**

ABOVE RIGHT: **Industry leaders offered large rewards to people who held information about activists among the weavers**

FIGHTING FOR FAIR PAY

The weavers' protest in Manchester may have been violent but it did achieve a modicum of success. Though dragoons were called in to restore peace (and one protester died during this response), the rioting was replicated in surrounding

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2

towns in Lancashire, and the weavers won a small concession in the form of a modest rise in their wages.

Some scholars of Jane Austen believe that the Gordon Riots of 1780 also contributed to her description in *Northanger Abbey*, though those events took place when the author was only four years old. In particular, these scholars cite her reference to a deadly disturbance during which "the streets of London [were] flowing with blood", as well as an attack on the Bank of England. The Gordon Riots were certainly bloody, a violent response to the Papists Act 1778, which aimed to reduce discrimination faced by Catholics. Anti-Catholic protests, led by the head of the Protestant Association, Lord George Gordon, exploded into chaos, with a week of rioting, burning and looting following in the capital, resulting in several hundred deaths.

Religion was also the cause of the 1791 Priestley Riots in Birmingham, in which non-Anglicans who supported the French Revolution were attacked and their property damaged or destroyed. Local taxation was the reason for the Bristol Bridge Riot two years later; the militia were called to quell this disturbance, and 11 people died.

HEADSTRONG HEROINES

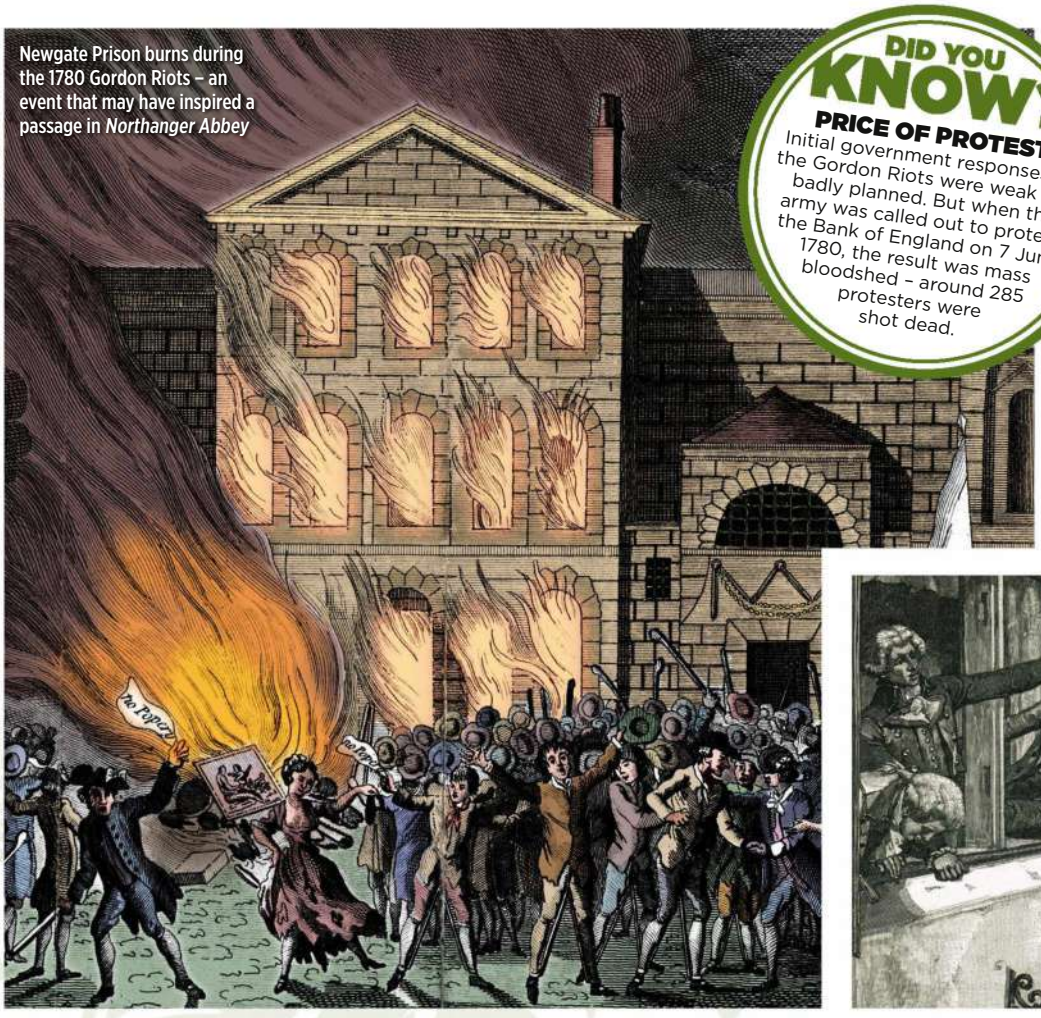
As well as including occasional references to events playing out across the country, Austen didn't confine her social commentary to the romantic politics of the gentry. Although by no means a polemical feminist, she put the disparity between men and women in the late Georgian period at the heart of her novels. They focus heavily on marriage, the ways women are defined by their husband, and what society's expectations of women.

Women seldom owned property; they couldn't vote; they were barred from higher education; and they were rarely able to access prestigious professions. Certainly, a middle-class woman who had to work was looked down upon. Despite the absence of women's rights, Austen's headstrong heroines are by no means shrinking violets in their marriages or in their pursuit of suitable husbands. Although she can't give her female characters the rights that society has denied them, Austen does empower them with purpose and intent.

"Austen put the disparity between men and women at the heart of her novels"

Women lower down the social strata simply had to work if their husband's income wasn't sufficient – those who were married, that is. Women were also required to maintain a functioning household, even when conditions beyond their control intervened. Such conditions arose in 1795, when a savagely cold winter brought the average temperature in the English Midlands down below –3°C. When the rivers thawed, great floods raged, so that crops didn't grow, and animals couldn't graze.

Angry women tackled the resulting food scarcity head-on in what was later dubbed the 'Revolt of the Housewives' or the 'Food Riots'. Unscrupulous merchants took full advantage of ▶

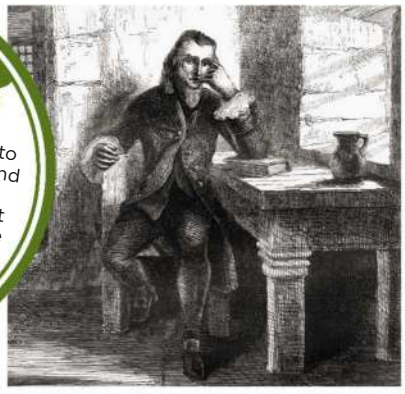


Newgate Prison burns during the 1780 Gordon Riots – an event that may have inspired a passage in *Northanger Abbey*

DID YOU KNOW?

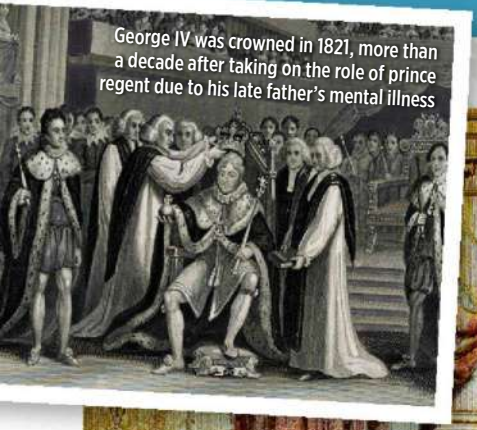
PRICE OF PROTEST

Initial government responses to the Gordon Riots were weak and badly planned. But when the army was called out to protect the Bank of England on 7 June 1780, the result was mass bloodshed – around 285 protesters were shot dead.

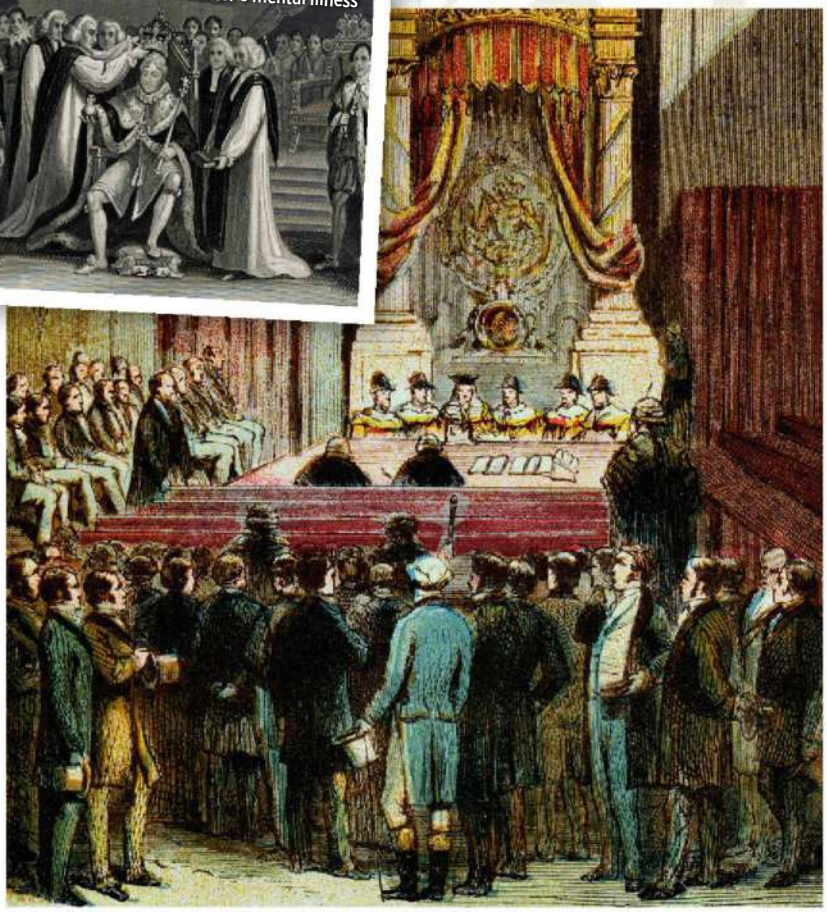


ABOVE: **Lord George Gordon, whose anti-Catholic campaign sparked the riots named after him**

BELOW: **Non-Anglicans who supported the French Revolution were targeted in the 1791 Priestley Riots**



George IV was crowned in 1821, more than a decade after taking on the role of prince regent due to his late father's mental illness



An illustration shows the Reform Bill being introduced to Parliament. The 1832 bill paved the way for a large-scale extension of the vote – though vast swathes of the population were still excluded

the fact that demand far outstripped supply, pushing up the prices of items such as flour and meat – but the rioters weren't having high prices dictated to them. They seized merchants' goods and sold them at what they believed were true market prices, giving the proceeds to the merchants.

Such direct action was one way that women, with no electoral power, could effect change. But other people were also denied the vote in Austen's time. Indeed, only 200,000 individuals – all of them property-owning men – had the vote. So a wave of vociferous reformers fiercely pushed for a large-scale extension of electoral suffrage – in the face of equally implacable opposition.

Boasting nearly 30 MPs among its ranks, the Society of the Friends of the People filed a petition in the House of Commons in 1793, demanding electoral reform. This was heavily quashed in a parliamentary vote by MPs concerned about the redistribution of power to the masses after the French Revolution four years earlier. And while that Society was trying to put the subject of reform on the political agenda, organisations such as the Hampden Clubs and the London Corresponding Society, whose more radical proposals included extending the vote to all adults, met with even greater opposition.

It wasn't until the Reform Act of 1832 that the growing metropolis of Manchester gained any representation in the Commons. Unsurprisingly, then, the protection of entrenched interests in Parliament, and the means by which this was legitimised by a very limited notion of democracy, poured extra fuel on the bonfire of disquiet that flared among large swathes of the population.

PROBLEMS AT THE PINNACLE

While the fabric of wider society was being unpicked, unease also proliferated right at the pinnacle of the British elite. While George III bounced between bouts of madness and lucidity, the threat of a constitutional crisis always hung heavy in the air. In 1788, a bill was passed in the Commons that would see the king's eldest son, another George, become regent. The king emerged intact from that episode of mental ill health, and the bill was withdrawn before it had progressed through the House of Lords. By 1811, though, his insanity had become permanent, and another regency bill successfully negotiated its way through Parliament. With the Care of King During His Illness etc Act 1811, George III was replaced as head of state by his son, who eventually became King George IV on his father's death in 1820.

By then, Jane Austen had also died, passing away three years earlier, in 1817, at the age of just 41. Her great success and renown arrived only posthumously. Yet her legacy proved to be not only her artfully plotted novels, populated by enduring characters, but also her ability to depict – albeit subtly – the late Georgian period as it approached the crossroads of change.

WORDS: NIGE TASSELL

THE INDUSTRIAL AGE COMETH

Austen's writing did little to reflect the vast changes taking place in Britain's cities

Jane Austen's novels might be set on rolling country estates and in well-heeled towns and cities, but the Industrial Revolution was well underway during her lifetime. Although more commonly associated with the early Victorian age, industrial development was progressing at lightning speed during Austen's lifetime, and the largely rural economy that had dominated the countryside was being undermined. Towns and cities grew rapidly, their skylines soaring and their populations booming. The nature and pace of everyday life was irrevocably changed within a generation, and the world became driven by steam, not horse. Who knows what themes Austen's novels might have touched on had she been born 50 years later, or if she'd grown up in the dirty heart of a city dominated by factories and chimneys. As it is, her works remain lasting memorials to a fading, possibly more innocent era.

Would Austen have chosen to write about industrial communities like Saltaire, built by textile magnate Titus Salt, had she been born later?

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AN AGE OF WAR AND REVOLUTION

Jane Austen's lifetime coincided with near-constant conflict and bloodshed on both sides of the Atlantic

The American Revolutionary War (1775–83)

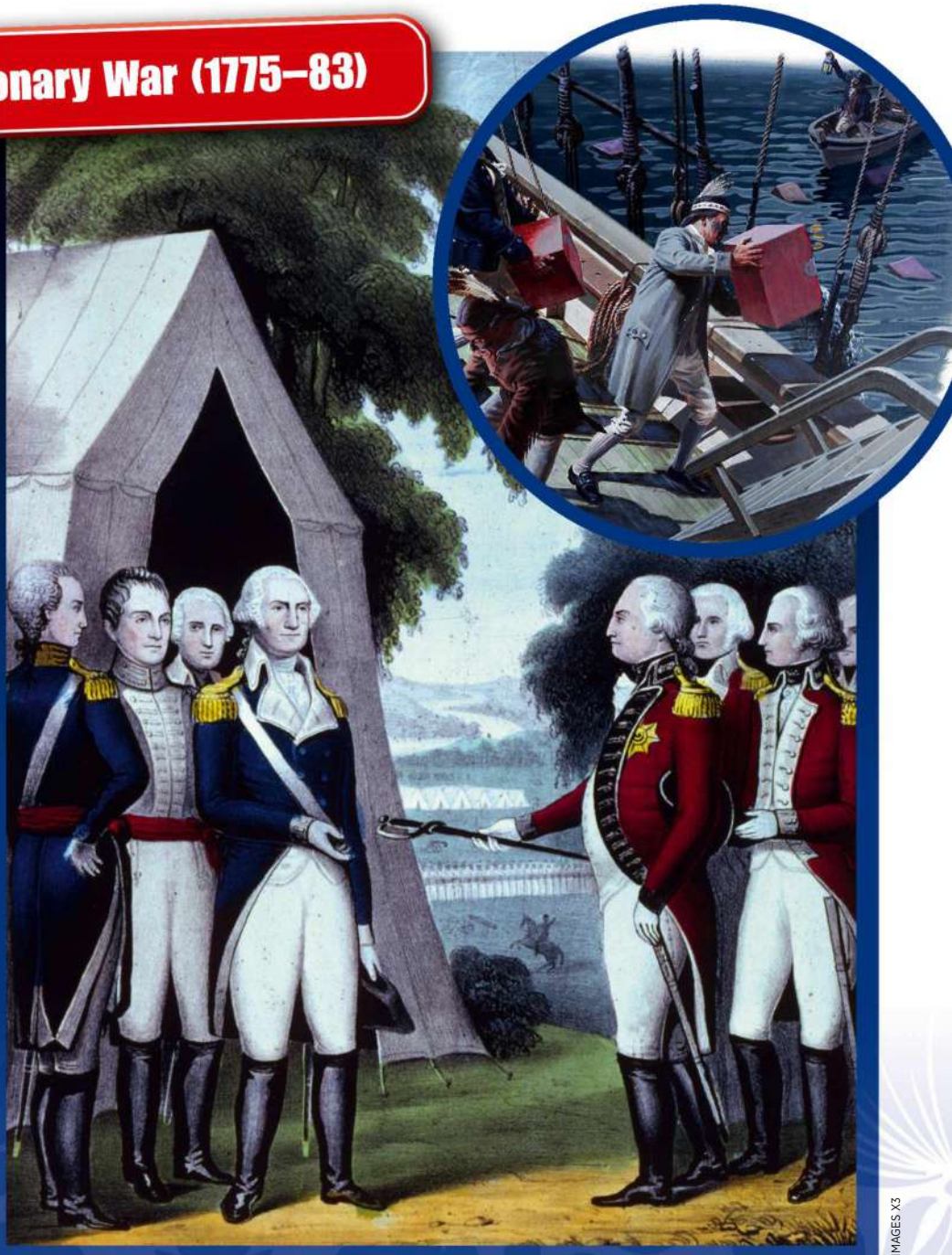
Born eight months after the outbreak of the American Revolution, Jane Austen entered a world on the brink of seismic change. Although the conflict that ended with the independence of 13 North American colonies from British rule did not affect her directly, its geopolitical legacy shaped the world in which she came of age.

During the 1760s and 1770s, colonists in North America grew increasingly frustrated with taxation by Britain, and by its legislative supremacy over their lives. In 1773, the Tea Act effectively gave the East India Company a monopoly on importing tea to America – and levied taxes on that tea, payable to the British Government. In response, colonists disguised as Mohawk Native Americans boarded British ships and dumped an entire shipment of tea into Boston Harbour – a protest known as the Boston Tea Party. Westminster responded by passing the Intolerable Acts, ending local self-government and commerce in Boston.

INDEPENDENT THINKING

Tensions boiled over in April 1775, when British troops in Massachusetts attempted to confiscate weapons in Lexington and Concord. When they met resisting local militia, the "shot heard 'round the world" was fired – marking the start of the Revolutionary War. The following year, on 4 July 1776, delegates from 13 colonies assembled in Philadelphia declared their independence and established the United States of America.

Over the next five years, on battlefields from Bunker Hill to Yorktown, the colonists – led by figures including George Washington – fought for liberty and self-governance. And, with support from France and other European powers, the tide turned in their favour. Signing the Treaty of Paris in 1783, Britain formally recognised the US as an independent nation, ending the conflict. But the ideals championed in that war opened the era of the Atlantic Revolutions.



MAIN: **British general Charles Cornwallis (*right*) surrenders to George Washington after the battle of Yorktown in 1781**
INSET: **Colonial resentment at British taxation boiled over at the Boston Tea Party, when tea was thrown into the harbour**

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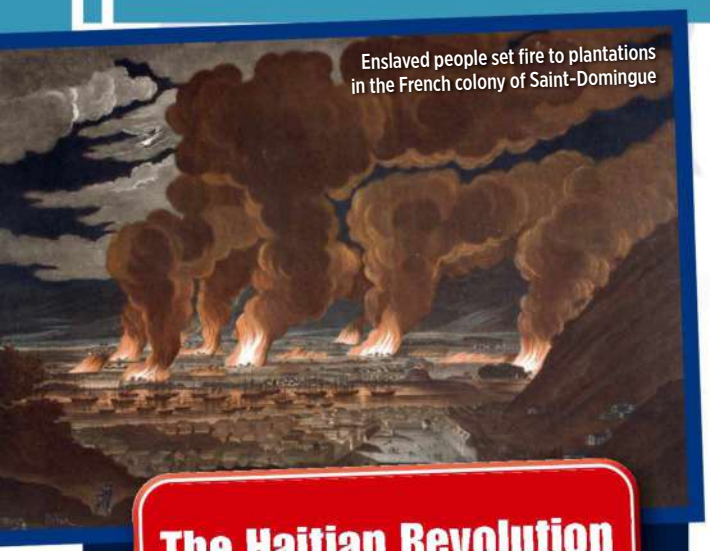


Enslaved people set fire to plantations in the French colony of Saint-Domingue

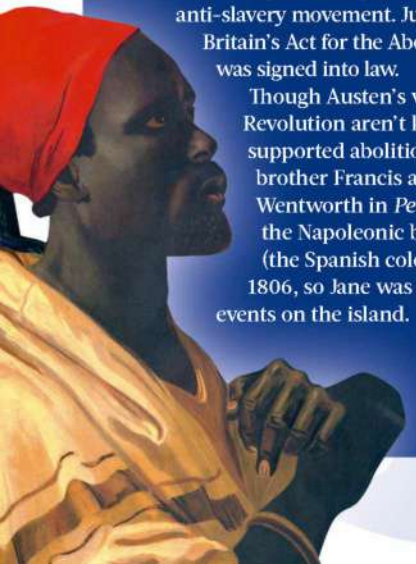
The Haitian Revolution (1791–1804)

On 22 August 1791, the French colony of Saint-Domingue, on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, was shaken by an uprising. Inspired by the French Revolution, more than 100,000 enslaved Africans overthrew the oppressive regime, leaving many of its 8,000 plantations in ruins and more than 1,000 Europeans dead. The colony was the most lucrative in the Caribbean, producing around half of the world's coffee and sugar, so in 1792 Paris dispatched a 6,000-strong force to pacify it.

Following the outbreak of the French Revolutionary Wars, in 1793 British and Spanish troops arrived on the island, exacerbating the turmoil as these European powers recruited people to their war aims. Amid this chaos, Toussaint L'Ouverture – who had been born into slavery on Saint-Domingue – emerged as a figurehead. In 1796/97, he became deputy governor and then commander-in-chief of the French forces and, after expelling the British and Spanish, he established a new regime over much of Hispaniola, assuming dictatorial powers and launching efforts to revive its damaged economy.

In 1802, another French expedition ousted L'Ouverture and whisked him to France, where he died in captivity a year later. When Napoleon restored slavery in Saint-Domingue, the revolution erupted afresh and, led by the formerly enslaved Jean-Jacques Dessalines, revolutionary forces decisively expelled the French. On 1 January 1804, the Republic of Haiti – the first led by people of colour – was declared, galvanising the international anti-slavery movement. Just three years later, Britain's Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was signed into law.

Though Austen's views on the Haitian Revolution aren't known, many in her circle supported abolitionism. And both her brother Francis and the fictional Captain Wentworth in *Persuasion* were present at the Napoleonic battle of Santo Domingo (the Spanish colony on Hispaniola) in 1806, so Jane was clearly familiar with events on the island.



Toussaint L'Ouverture emerged as the leader of the Haitian Revolution, inspiring enslaved people to fight for independence

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The French Revolutionary Wars (1792–1802)

Having provided support for the American independence cause, France's King Louis XVI grappled with a mounting economic crisis. In 1789, hunger and widespread discontent sparked revolution: on 14 July, a Parisian mob stormed the Bastille prison, reviled symbol of royal tyranny. But the movement's pursuit of liberty, equality and fraternity – and the revolutionary government's aspiration to spread these principles beyond France's borders – spooked Europe's monarchies.

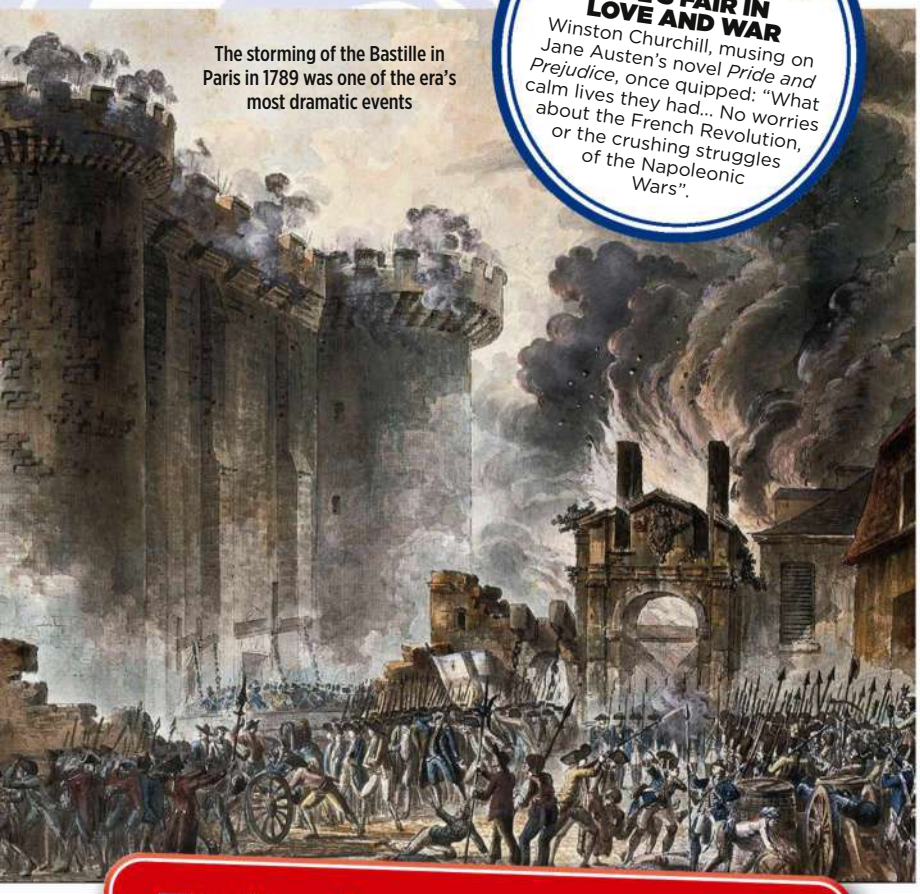
Over time, factionalism and infighting split the revolutionaries. In an effort to rally national unity, the government targeted France's historic enemies, and in April 1792 declared war on Austria. Later, Louis and his Austrian-born queen, Marie Antoinette, were toppled and executed. A series of coalitions formed by European powers including Britain, Russia, Austria and Prussia aimed to contain and reverse the revolutionary changes in France in wars spanning much of the next decade.

THE WAR AT HOME

These conflicts spread revolutionary and nationalist ideals, and pioneered strategies such as national conscription. But their most significant legacy would be the meteoric rise of a Corsican corporal, Napoleon Bonaparte. After a decade of turmoil, the 1802 Treaty of Amiens was signed by France and Britain, bringing to an end the Revolutionary Wars – though not auguring a lasting peace with France.

The Austen family wasn't untouched by these events. Of Jane's brothers, Henry joined the Oxfordshire Militia, while Francis and Charles enlisted in the Royal Navy. Jane was horrified by a description by her cousin (and, later, sister-in-law) Eliza de Feuillide of her first husband's guillotining in 1794, during the bloody period of the French Revolution known as the Terror. Like her contemporaries, Jane eagerly followed events. She even sported an Egyptian-style 'Mamalouc' cap to a ball honouring Lord Nelson's victory over the French at the battle of the Nile.

Napoleon's strategic brilliance and imperial ambition led to over a decade of bloodshed



The storming of the Bastille in Paris in 1789 was one of the era's most dramatic events

DID YOU KNOW?

ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR

Winston Churchill, musing on Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice*, once quipped: "What calm lives they had... No worries about the French Revolution, or the crushing struggles of the Napoleonic Wars".

The Napoleonic Wars (1803–15)

Jane Austen's career as a writer reached its zenith during the series of wars involving Napoleonic France. Her most famous novels were penned as those conflicts raged and, though war itself is absent from her stories, the military characters she created, and the references to everyday hardship in her books, attest to her lived reality. Two of her brothers were fighting in the Royal Navy, and the threat of a French invasion of England remained credible until Nelson's victory at Trafalgar in October 1805.

Napoleon Bonaparte was a skilled military leader who rose to prominence during the French Revolution. After seizing power in 1799, Napoleon – who later crowned himself Emperor of the French – aimed to establish an empire and exert his influence globally. Through military campaigns, he drove a rapid expansion of French territory, conquering numerous European nations and bringing them under his rule. His military victories – including in battles at Austerlitz in 1805 and Jena-Auerstedt in 1806 – demonstrated his tactical brilliance and reshaped the political landscape of the continent.

END OF AN ERA

Britain, Russia, Prussia, Austria and other nations joined forces in coalitions pushing back against Napoleonic France. A series of battles and campaigns followed, notably the Peninsular War in Spain and Portugal, and the Russian campaign of 1812. Despite his military prowess, Napoleon's invasion of Russia proved disastrous, and led to his first abdication in April 1814, followed by exile to the Mediterranean island of Elba.

The following year, while European statesmen were gathered in Vienna to establish a new continental order, Napoleon escaped from Elba and landed in southern France. Arriving in Paris in March 1815, he resumed hostilities – culminating in French defeat at the battle of Waterloo in June 1815 by a combined British and Prussian force led by the Duke of Wellington and Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher. Napoleon was subsequently exiled once more, to the island of St Helena in the South Atlantic, marking the end of the Napoleonic era and decades of warfare.

The War of 1812 (1812–15)

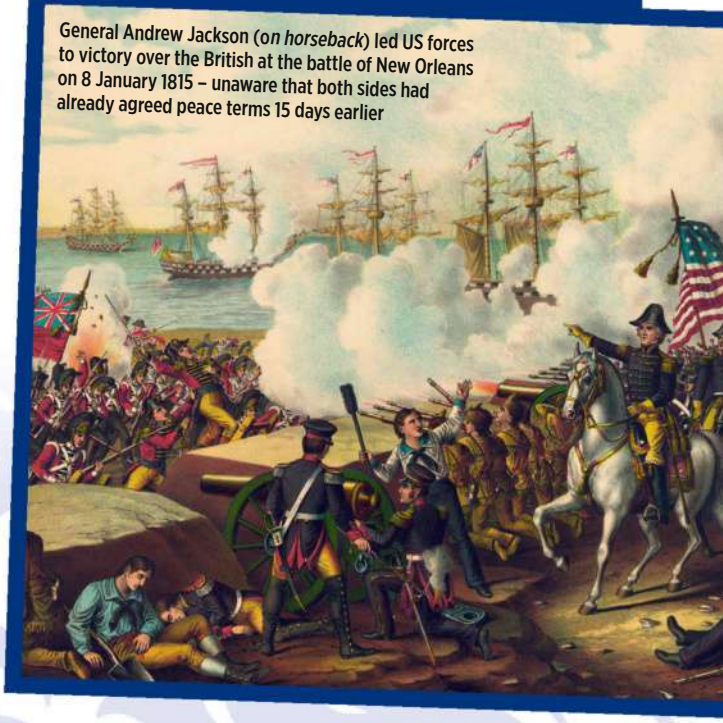
In a letter dated 2 September 1814, Jane Austen wrote: "I place my hope of better things on a claim to the protection of Heaven, as a Religious Nation, a Nation in spite of much Evil improving in Religion, which I cannot believe the Americans to possess." Despite her reticence in discussing many of the global events that defined her era, the coincidence of this scathing verdict with a conflict then raging in North America is perhaps telling.

So-called 'War Hawks' in Congress asserted that Britain's presence in Canada posed a threat to the US, and called for military action. Tensions had arisen as a direct result of two decades of near-constant warfare between Britain and France. Factors that frustrated the US included impressment (forced recruitment) into the Royal Navy of American sailors believed to be deserters; competing Anglo-French trade restrictions imposed on neutral powers such as the US; and British support for Native American resistance to US expansion westwards across North America. So, on 18 June 1812, the US declared war on Britain, launching a conflict that would last nearly three years.

Despite initial American naval victories, the British were able to maintain blockades of key US ports. On 24 August 1814, in retaliation for American attacks on York (modern-day Toronto), British soldiers burned public buildings in Washington DC – including the White House and the Capitol.

War fatigue and economic stresses forced both sides to the negotiating table, and on 24 December 1814 the Treaty of Ghent was signed. Even so, the distances involved delayed ratification of the treaty by Congress until 16 February 1815 – after US victory at the battle of New Orleans on 8 January.

WORDS: DANNY BIRD



General Andrew Jackson (*on horseback*) led US forces to victory over the British at the battle of New Orleans on 8 January 1815 – unaware that both sides had already agreed peace terms 15 days earlier

MEET THE EXPERT

DR LIZZIE ROGERS ON HOW AUSTEN'S WRITING REFLECTS A PIVOTAL PERIOD OF HISTORY

Austen's era might feel far removed – but it could resonate with us more than ever

DR LIZZIE ROGERS is a writer and historian of the 18th and early 19th centuries, specialising in women's history and historic houses, as well as Jane Austen. To hear Dr Rogers discussing life in Jane Austen's England on our podcast, scan the QR code shown above or visit *historyextra.com/jane-austen-qa*

It is easy to dismiss Jane Austen's era as a quiet period in England's history, when the months passed in a succession of visits to country houses, grand balls and taking tea. Yet the years through which the author lived, from 1775 to 1817, represented a period of great transition.

We do both ourselves and Austen a great injustice if we reduce those 41-plus years to the kind of neat, confined picture of serenity often falsely associated with her work. The idea that her writing was merely amusing and warming was so enduring that her novels were even prescribed for soldiers suffering from shell-shock after World War I, such were their comforting properties. Yet during her lifetime, England – and the wider world – was experiencing great upheavals, the legacies of which we are still grappling with today.

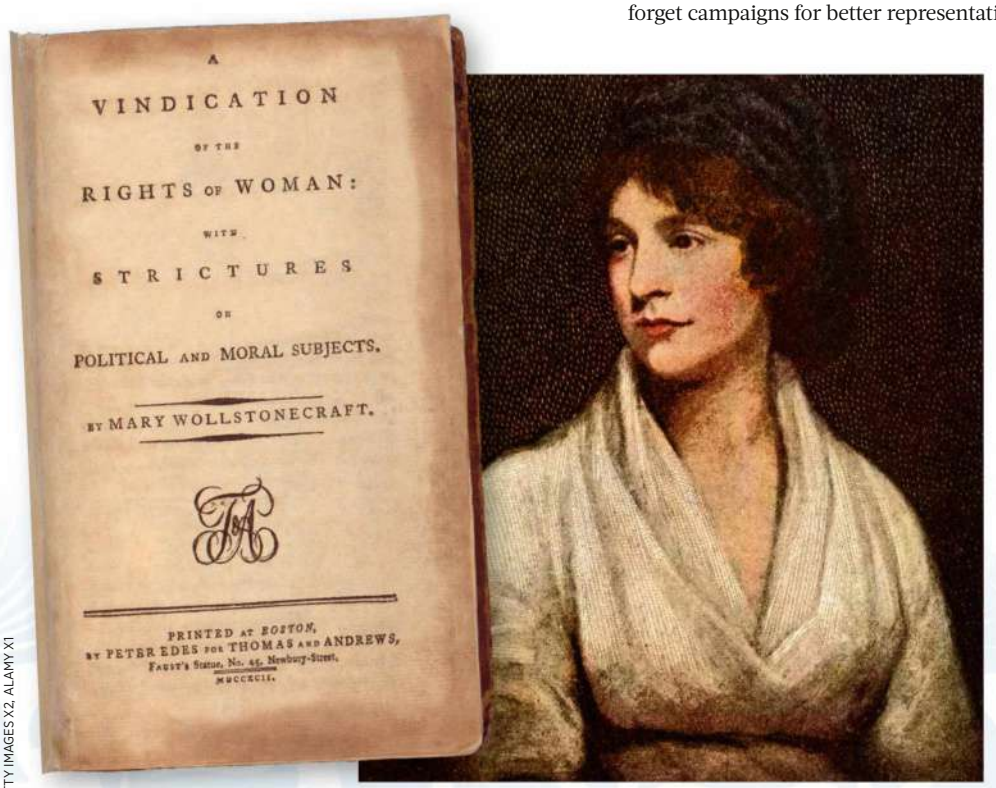
Austen's writing provides glimpses of a changing world. In the years following her birth, Britain was at war with France and Spain, and militias across the country were ready to fight at any time. Though the British trade in enslaved people was prohibited in 1807, the institution of slavery would not be abolished until almost three decades later, and total emancipation still lay many more years in the future.

The position of women in society was under scrutiny, too. Mary Wollstonecraft, an important voice among the canon of writers addressing gender inequality, published her hugely influential book *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* in 1792. And let us not forget campaigns for better representation in Parliament, revolutions on either side of the Atlantic, and instability in the rule of the country as the future – and rather unpopular – George IV became Prince Regent.

There are whispers of these events and ideas in Austen's fiction. And if we explore the work of other writers such as Ignatius Sancho and Frances Burney, we expand our view of the late 18th and early 19th centuries still further. Through frequent representation in fiction and on screen, this era might feel far removed from our own – but arguably it could resonate with us more than ever on several levels.

Austen wrote about financial precarity, gender roles, family dynamics, relationships and social status with a sharp eye for satire. Not only that, but she was writing in a period of racial inequality, of social and political unrest, of war and conflict, and of uncertainty about leadership. If we think about these things thematically, it is hard not to see stark parallels with our world over 200 years later, and with many aspects of our own society that we are trying to change today.

By seeking to better understand the period in which Jane Austen lived and worked, and by liberating voices that have previously been lost to the annals of time, we can learn and move forward – seeing the importance of that era, and why it should still hold our attention.



Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* bolstered efforts to address gender inequality in Austen's time

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GET HOOKED

Learn more about life during Jane Austen's era with our pick of books, podcasts and TV programmes

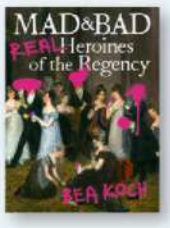
BOOKS

SELECTED BY DR LIZZIE ROGERS

Jane Austen: The Secret Radical

By Helena Kelly (Icon Books, 2016)

Kelly introduces readers to a passionate woman living in an age of revolution; to a writer whose novels grappled with the weightiest of subjects – from feminism and slavery to the power of the Church.



Mad and Bad: Real Heroines of the Regency Era

By Bea Koch (Grand Central Publishing, 2020)

Koch shines a light on the boundary-breaking women who lived life on their own terms during the Regency period – from mixed-race gentlewoman Dido Elizabeth Belle to pioneering linguist Judith Montefiore.

Eavesdropping on Jane Austen's England

By Roy and Lesley Adkins (Little, Brown, 2013)

Historians Roy and Lesley Adkins explore the real England of Jane Austen's lifetime – a troubled period marked by dramatic changes in industry and agriculture and a constant fear of revolution and invasion.

In These Times: Living in Britain through Napoleon's Wars

By Jenny Uglow (Routledge, 2013)

Uglow follows the gripping back-and-forth of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, delving into the archives to reveal how ordinary British people lived, loved, sang and wrote throughout the conflicts.

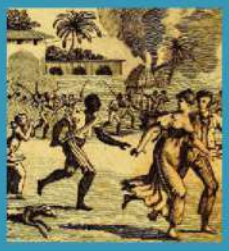
ON THE BBC

BBC RADIO 4

◀ In Our Time: The Gordon Riots

bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0004mbx

Melvyn Bragg and guests look at how a Westminster protest against 'popery' in June 1780 descended into several days of violent riots across London.



BBC RADIO 4

◀ You're Dead to Me: The Haitian Revolution

bbc.co.uk/programmes/p08nf7t2

Greg Jenner is joined by Professor Marlene Daut and comedian Athena Kugblenu to examine the story behind the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804).

BBC RADIO 4

◀ Napoleon: The Man and the Myths

bbc.co.uk/sounds/series/b05zzlb4

Presented by Napoleon biographer Dr Andrew Roberts, this five-part series from 2015 dispels some of the prevailing myths about the self-proclaimed 'Emperor of the French'.

ON HISTORYEXTRA

For podcasts, features, quizzes, interviews and more on life during Jane Austen's era, scan the QR code shown right or visit *historyextra.com/period/georgian*

▶ Jane Austen's England: everything you wanted to know

Dr Lizzie Rogers answers listeners' questions about the world in which Jane Austen lived and wrote. Listen at *historyextra.com/jane-austen-qa*

▶ How to succeed in Regency courtship

Emily Brand looks at how men and women navigated the marriage market in Regency high society. Read at *historyextra.com/regency-courtship*

▶ Rich vs poor in Regency Britain

Dr Ian Mortimer examines the vast chasm between rich and poor in early 19th-century British society. Listen at *historyextra.com/regency-rich-poor*

WATCH

Pride and Prejudice (1995)

(streaming on various platforms)

Colin Firth and Jennifer Ehle are among the stars in this award-winning BBC adaptation of Jane Austen's famous Regency romance.

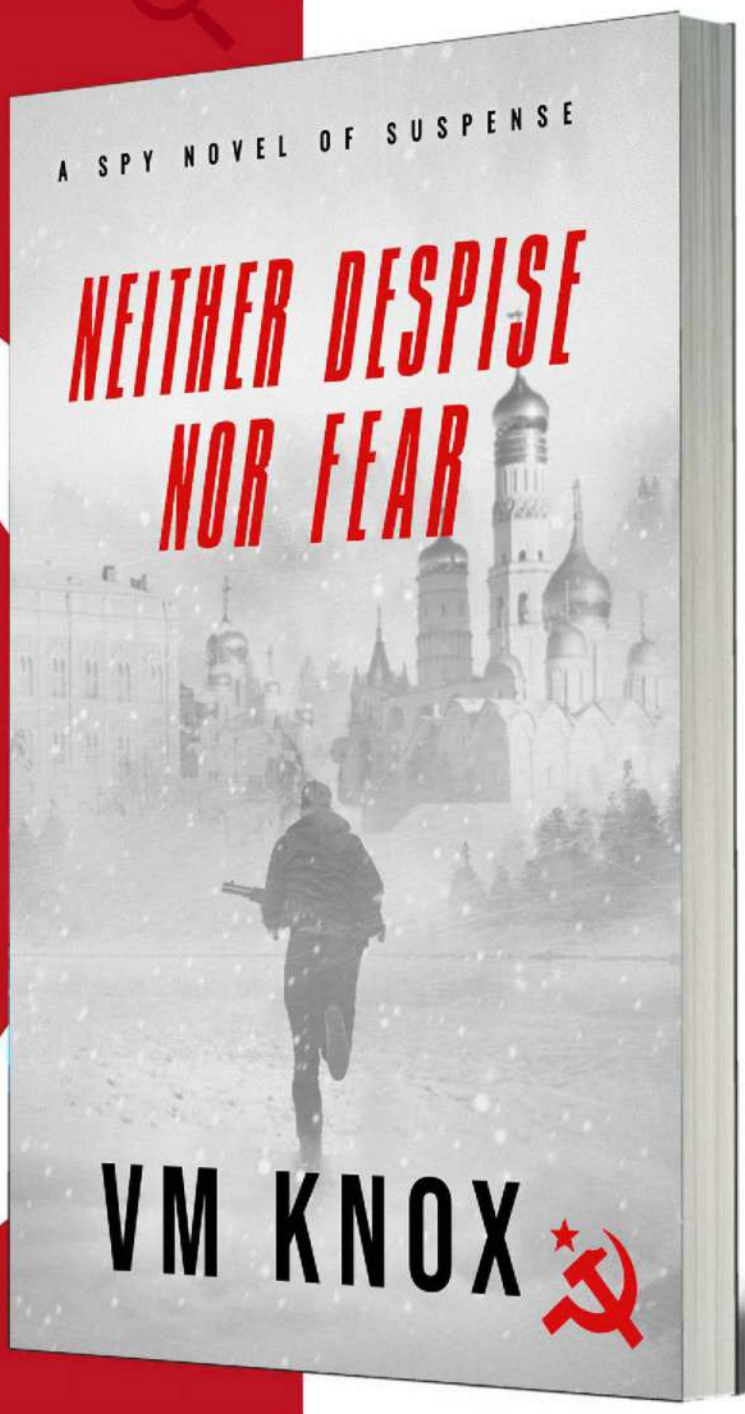
Jane Austen: Behind Closed Doors

(streaming on BBC iPlayer)

Lucy Worsley explores the different houses in which Jane Austen lived and stayed and discovers just how much they shaped the author's novels.

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X1, BBC X1

From the bestselling author of the Clement Wisdom novels comes a thrilling new Cold War espionage series



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TOP 10 TOYS

From dolls and marbles to hula hoops and spinning tops, a huge range of toys and games have enthralled children over many centuries. This month, we delve into the fascinating origins of some of our favourites...

Barbie and Ken dolls have been made with a huge variety of hair colours and costumes

Remarkably lifelike dolls were made in Roman times – like this fourth-century AD figure

ARTICULATED DOLL

From crying plastic 'babies' to Barbie and Ken, dolls are as popular today as they have ever been – and the role of the artificial childhood playmate is certainly not a new one. More than 500 objects excavated at sites across the Roman empire have been identified as dolls, many of them found in the tombs of young girls, with the earliest examples dating from c200 BC. Ancient dolls – such as the fourth-century AD example shown left, discovered in a child's grave at the Necropolis of Ontur in Albacete, Spain – were made of cloth, bone, clay, wood or ivory, and some even boasted jointed limbs. Interestingly, these ancient dolls were modelled on adult bodies: many featured breasts and elongated legs and torsos, as well as detailed faces and hairstyles. Elsewhere, the discovery of manufacturing moulds at religious sanctuaries, and the fact that many were made from fragile materials, indicates that ancient dolls had sacred functions in addition to their role as much-loved companions.

GETTY IMAGES X3

RATTLE

Noisy, usually brightly coloured and great to fling around: it's little wonder that the rattle has remained a firm favourite with babies across the centuries. One of the oldest baby rattles ever found – a sealed terracotta ball containing tiny pebbles, dating back to c2200 BC – still makes a sound when shaken, as it would have for its tiny owner more than 4,000 years ago. This Bronze Age toy was discovered in Aksaray, Turkey, in 2016. Three years earlier, a clay rattle in the shape of a pillow, filled with small balls, was discovered in pit tombs in Łęgowo, Poland.

Even royal babies enjoyed making some noise – albeit with fancier toys – including the future Edward VI, shown here clutching his golden, sceptre-shaped rattle in c1538.

LEFT: **Only the most regal rattle was good enough for Henry VIII's son, Prince Edward**

BELOW: **This Bronze-Age rattle was made over 4,000 years ago**

YO-YO

Trickier to master than it might seem, the yo-yo boasts a surprisingly long history: it's thought to have evolved from an ancient Chinese toy, the diabolo. What's believed to be the earliest depiction of a yo-yo appears on an ancient Greek vase from the fifth century BC, showing a young boy seemingly honing his yo-yo skills – though it has also been argued that he is twirling a disc known as an *iynx*, in a bid to attract luck in love. The plaything's appeal quickly went global, with peoples ranging from the Maya to the Romans trying to 'walk the dog' with terracotta, clay, wooden or even metal yo-yos. Fast-forward a couple of millennia and you'll find the future Louis XVII of France clutching a treasured yo-yo in a 1789 portrait. Nearly a century later, the first US patent for the toy was granted, and in 1928 Filipino immigrant Pedro Flores made adaptations that enabled users to master new tricks, introducing it to a new audience – and bringing with him the name by which the popular toy is now known.

Marbles were clearly popular playthings in the 18th century, as this border tile proves

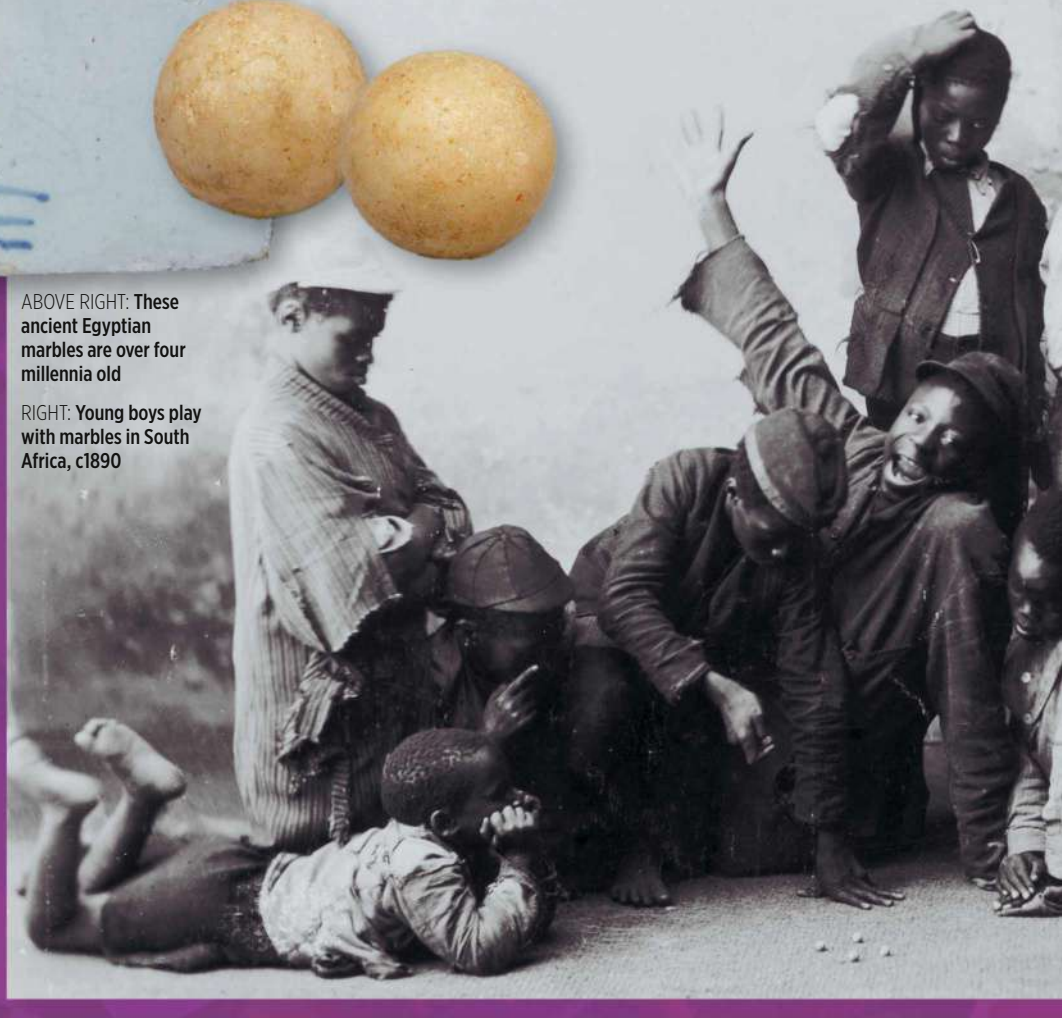
MARBLES

Unsurprisingly, marbles also have a long history. It's thought that cave people may well have played with small rounded pebbles or balls of natural clay many thousands of years ago. Indeed, small clay balls have been found around the world in ancient Egyptian tombs, Native American burial grounds and Aztec pyramids. It was in 19th-century Germany, though, that the creation of glass marbles really took off, aided by the 1848 invention of marble scissors, which revolutionised the process. Not long afterwards, in the 1880s, glass marbles entered mass production.

Towards the end of the century, American entrepreneurs decided they wanted a piece of the marble action and, in 1902, Danish immigrant Martin Frederick Christensen patented a machine that could make "spherical bodies or balls". By 1910, up to 10,000 marbles were being made every day at the MF Christensen and Son Company in Ohio. Marble-making was officially on a roll.

ABOVE RIGHT: **These ancient Egyptian marbles are over four millennia old**

RIGHT: **Young boys play with marbles in South Africa, c1890**



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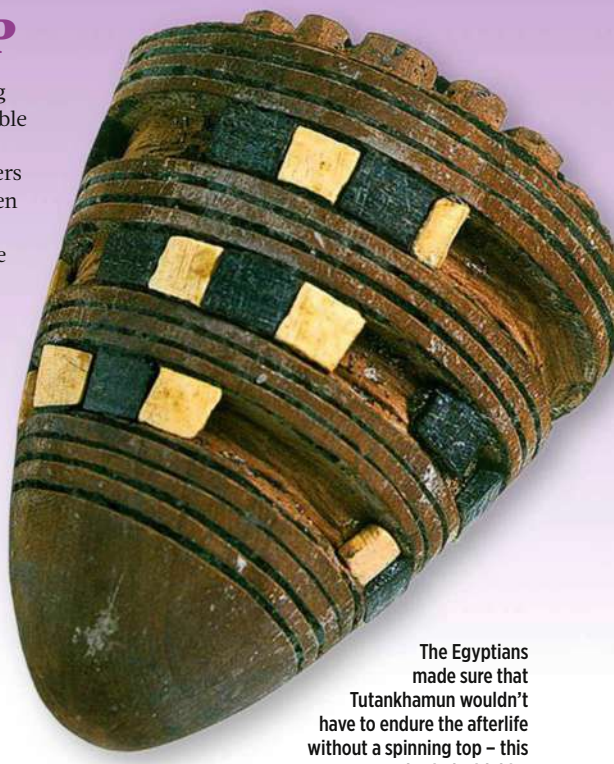
The short-lived Louis Charles, briefly King Louis XVII of France, was known to be fond of his yo-yo

SPINNING TOP

It's said by some that the spinning top is the world's oldest recognisable toy – and it's easy to see why: the simple, gravity-defying design offers hours of repetitive fun. The toy even has its own international day, the second Wednesday of October. One of the oldest spinning tops, made of clay and dating from around 3500 BC, was discovered at an archaeological site in Muqayyer, Iraq. But spinning tops have been found in various places worldwide, including China and Turkey, crafted from a wide range of materials. A carved wooden spinning top was found in the tomb of ancient Egyptian pharaoh Tutankhamun, and one even gets a mention in Homer's *Iliad*. Designs varied: in ancient Greece and Rome, for example, the sides of a multi-sided top known as a *teetotum* were marked with symbols, serving in place of a dice and used in gambling games.



The Egyptians made sure that Tutankhamun wouldn't have to endure the afterlife without a spinning top – this one was buried with him

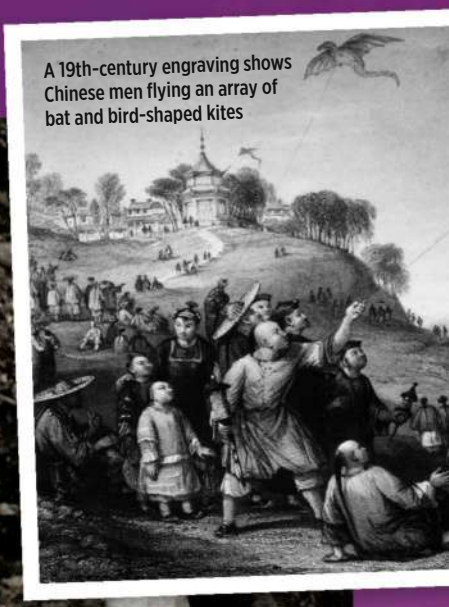
DICE

Despite the ancient Greek tragedian Sophocles' insistence that dice were invented by the legendary Palamedes during the siege of Troy, dice have a far longer history. In fact, the precursors of dice are believed to have been used by primitive people for the casting of lots to divine the future. And cube-shaped dice – similar to modern equivalents – have been found in excavations in China, dating from 600 BC, and in Egyptian tombs built around 2000 BC. Elsewhere, the first written records of dice appear in the *Mahabharata*, a Sanskrit epic completed more than 1,600 years ago. It seems that cheating is not a modern phenomenon, either: so-called crooked dice – tampered with to fix how they fall when thrown – have been found in ancient tombs, Viking burial sites and prehistoric graves in North and South America.

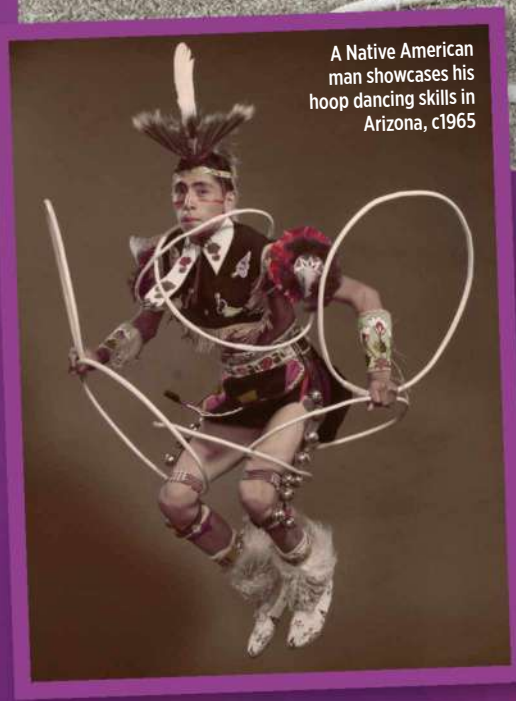
ABOVE: **Romans in London threw these wooden dice using a carved cup**

RIGHT: **Mosaics at a Roman villa in what's now Tunisia show dice being thrown there 18 centuries ago**

A young Japanese woman takes the hula hoop craze to new extremes in this 1958 snapshot



A 19th-century engraving shows Chinese men flying an array of bat and bird-shaped kites



A Native American man showcases his hoop dancing skills in Arizona, c1965

HULA HOOP

From fun to exercise, dancing to hunting, hoops have been used by children and adults alike for many centuries. Hooprolling in ancient Greece was a form of light exercise, while Native Americans used hoops as a way of honing their hunting and harpooning skills, throwing poles through the moving hoops to increase their accuracy. The Native American Lakota people are also known for their hoop dancing, beginning the routine with a single hoop, which represents the never-ending circle of life, and then adding additional hoops to represent other elements such as humans, animals, wind, water, and the seasons.

The hula hoop gained international popularity in the late 1950s, though, after the California-based Wham-O toy company began marketing plastic hoops: within four months, an estimated 25 million hula hoops were sold. The world was in the grip of a hula-hooping frenzy: hooping in the streets was banned in three Japanese cities for allegedly increasing traffic incidents; and public demonstrations were banned in Jakarta for fear they might "stimulate passions". Six months later, the fad had burned itself out. Whilst hula hoops remain popular, they never again reached the dizzying heights of 1958.

KITE

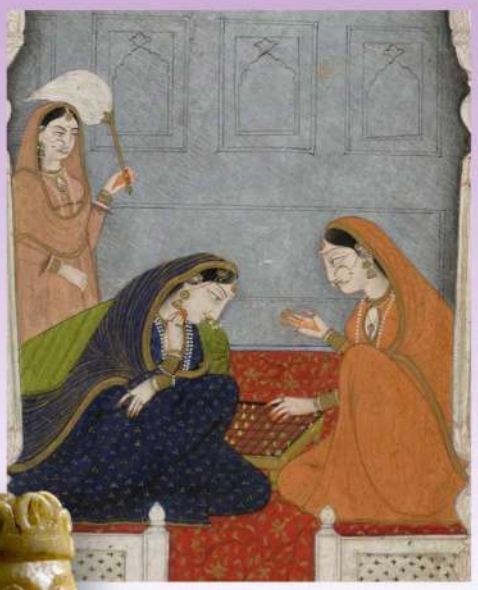
Believed by many to have been popularised in China around 3,000 years ago – although Malaysian, Indonesian, and South Pacific cultures are all also credited with being early kite users – kites have been flown for myriad reasons, among them to ward off evil, deliver messages, catch fish, spy on enemies and, of course, for sheer pleasure. The earliest written account of kite flying is from 200 BC China, where Chinese General Han Hsin of the Han Dynasty is recorded as flying a kite over the walls of a city he was besieging in order to measure how far his army would need to tunnel in order to breach its defences.

European kite flying came much later, with Marco Polo widely credited with bringing stories of the flying contraptions back from his voyages. According to his diaries, in 1282, he supposedly saw a man tied to a kite flying above the Chinese city of Weifang.

TOYS ON WHEELS

From ducks to dogs, cars to chariots, the novelty of toys on wheels has failed to wear off since someone first had the idea to create such a thing. In 2017, what is believed to be the world's oldest 'toy car' was discovered in the ancient city of Soğmatar in southeast Turkey. Made from earthenware, the little chariot on wheels is around 5,000 years old and is thought to have been made for the children of the city's kings or leaders. Elsewhere, the existence of wheeled toys provide the only evidence that wheels were used in any part of Mesoamerica before the 16th century. Other ancient toys on wheels – from wooden horses, to clay cows and even a bird with a ram's head – have been discovered in countries like Greece, Pakistan, Egypt and Italy.

The world's oldest-known 'toy car' was unearthed in Turkey back in 2017



ABOVE: **An early 19th-century image depicts a pair of Indian women playing *chaturanga*, considered a forebear of modern chess**

LEFT: **A queen chess piece from an ivory set crafted in Italy during the 13th century**

CHESS

It's not entirely clear where or when the game of chess originated. The oldest known forebear is *chaturanga*, thought to have emerged in what is now northern India during the sixth century AD. The exact rules have been lost to history, but the game was played on an 8 x 8 board with each type of piece boasting its own unique moves – just like today's game. The powerful queen piece (which replaced a figure known as the 'counsellor') was granted its present moves by the 15th century, and by the early modern period, chess had gained a reputation as the 'royal game'. In the 18th century, chess got serious, thanks, in part, to the efforts of Frenchman Francois-André Danican Philidor, who wrote extensively on chess theory.

Within a few decades the game began to be played in formal tournament settings, with the first international chess tournament taking place in London, in 1851.

WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN

GET HOOKED

LISTEN
Author Robin Gerber discusses the cultural significance of Barbie on a recent episode of the *HistoryExtra* podcast. Listen at *historyextra.com/barbie-pod*

GETTY IMAGES X6

HISTORY OF ART

WHAT GREAT PAINTINGS SAY

We explore the story behind an exquisite portrait that reflects the individuality, status and aspirations of its enigmatic sitter

Portrait of an African Man

by Jan Mostaert, c1525–30 (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam)

You might not realise it from a first glance, but you are looking at an extraordinary painting – a work so rare that it is widely believed to be the only European portrait of an autonomous individual of African descent to survive from the late medieval and early modern periods. The sitter, whose identity is still debated, gazes thoughtfully out of the painting, chin slightly raised. He has clearly put much thought into his attire: his clothing, whilst not the height of 1520s fashion, indicates that he is well-to-do and aspirational. Whoever he is, he looks like a man on the rise.

"This painting was created at a time when many African people were moving freely throughout Europe, perhaps as merchants, traders, travellers or dignitaries," comments Dr Victoria Avery, keeper of European sculpture and decorative arts at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. "The transatlantic trade in enslaved African people was in its infancy, and anti-black racism (used to justify the trafficking) had not yet developed. Here, we see an African man painted with respect and dignity by a white European artist. This black sitter has been portrayed with as much care and attention as any white sitter – from his authoritative pose to the subtle rendering of his expression."

"Less than a century later," continues Avery, "as the trade in enslaved people expanded rapidly, racist visual stereotypes replaced portraits of individual black people, as artists visually asserted the idea of European superiority and African inferiority. Black people, where they do appear in paintings, are commonly shown in servitude to their white 'masters'."

A MAN OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 2004, dendrochronology revealed that the youngest heartwood ring on the grained oak plank on which the work was painted was formed in 1509. Flemish painters would have needed to season their wood for several years before painting on it, according to Avery, meaning that the artwork was likely created in the 1520s. Since Mostaert can be placed at the court of Margaret of Austria between 1518 and 1521, where he had been commissioned to paint Margaret's husband, Philibert II, duke of Savoy, the young African man depicted here may well have been part of her courtly entourage.

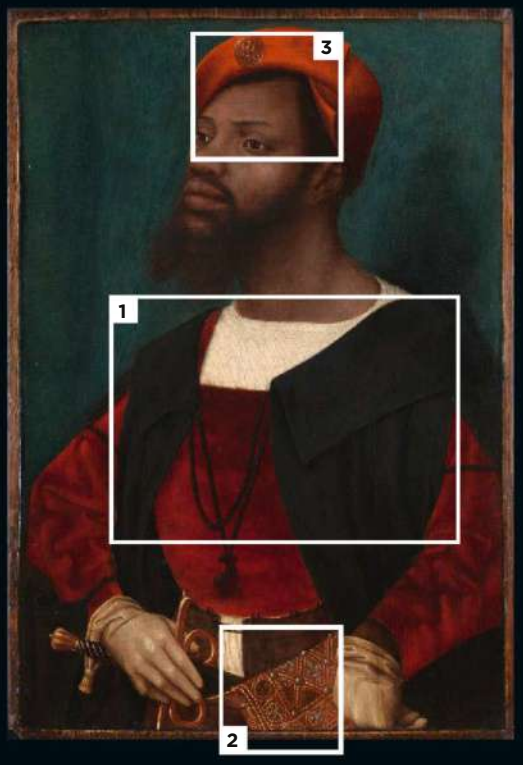
Another theory is that the sitter is Christophle le More, a black archer who served in the bodyguard of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.

"Le More crops up a number of times in the official records", comments Avery. "In 1503, for example, he is documented in the role of groom, while in 1521, he is recorded as a member of the bodyguard serving at the coronation of Charles V. Although the sitter's identity is uncertain, we do know that he was a devout Christian and proud of his faith, given that he has sewn a gold or silver-gilt pilgrim badge from the shrine of Our Lady of Halle, near Brussels, prominently onto the front of his cap."

Whatever the identity of this individual there is no doubt that, although not a nobleman, he is still a man of significance. His forked beard and short, cropped hair would have been highly fashionable at the time, while his exquisite thin, white leather gloves and elaborate leather or velvet bag, decorated with pearls and gold thread, say much about his wealth, status and aspirations. His right hand rests on the beautifully worked hilt of a sword, with its gilt pommel and handle bound round with silver.

"This is a truly incredible work of art," concludes Avery, "evidence of a time before the height of the transatlantic slave trade, when black Africans could move freely throughout Europe and be treated with respect and dignity by their white counterparts. I'm absolutely thrilled that we've been able to include the work in our new exhibition." ⊙

WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN



1. CLOTHING
The sitter is wearing a low-cut, deep red doublet and simple gown over a white shirt, with brown hose.

2. BAG
The beautiful bag is decorated with pearls and gold thread, with several floral motifs and a fleur-de-lis.

3. PILGRIM BADGE
Pinned to the man's hat is a gold or silver-gilt pilgrim badge, featuring an image of the Virgin Mary, indicating that he has made a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Halle, near Brussels. The site is famous for its black Madonna statue.

GET HOOKED

Portrait of an African Man will be on show from 8 September 2023–7 January 2024 at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, as part of the Black Atlantic: Power, People, Resistance exhibition. Visit the museum's website for more information: *fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk*

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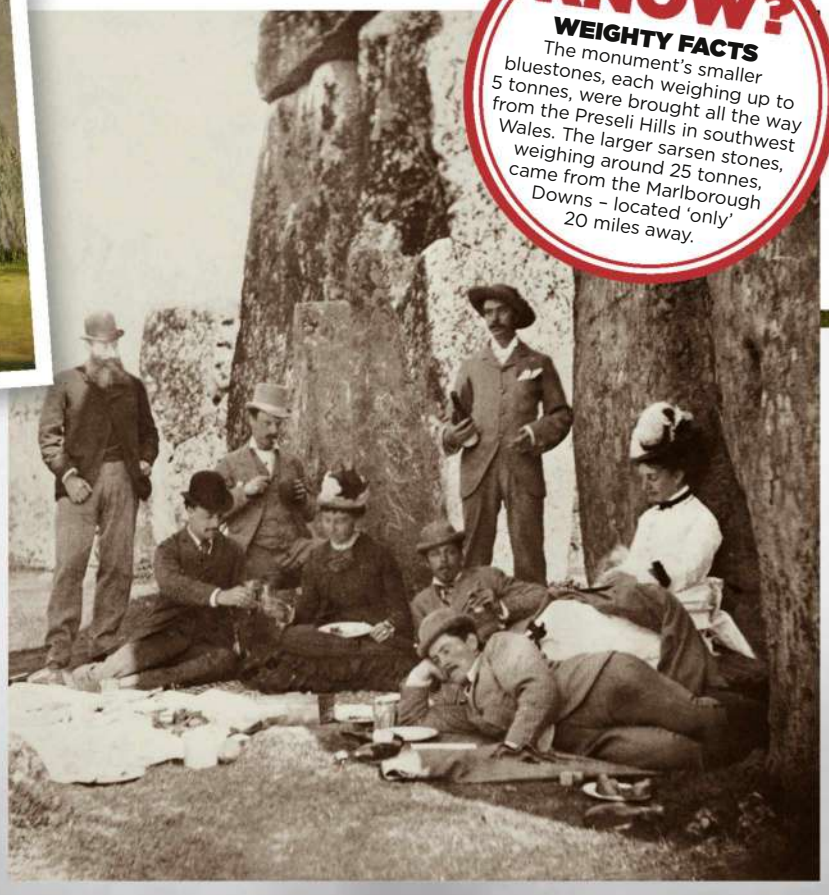
STONEHENGE

We explore key moments in the history of the Neolithic marvel – and its impact on British culture over the past two centuries

CENTRE OF ATTENTION, c1830

▲ From the 17th century, some four millennia after the great stone monument was erected on Salisbury Plain, it was increasingly visited by antiquarians such as John Aubrey – who studied the site in 1666 – and tourists. This soldier was painted amid the huge sarsens and bluestones c1830.



ROYAL REVIEW, 1877

▶ The advent of the railways made access to Stonehenge easier, bringing more visitors. These included Prince Leopold, Queen Victoria's son, pictured reclining during a picnic (*centre, looking at camera*) in 1877 – the same year Charles Darwin undertook experiments within the stone circle.

DID YOU KNOW?

WEIGHTY FACTS

The monument's smaller bluestones, each weighing up to 5 tonnes, were brought all the way from the Preseli Hills in southwest Wales. The larger sarsen stones, weighing around 25 tonnes, came from the Marlborough Downs – located 'only' 20 miles away.

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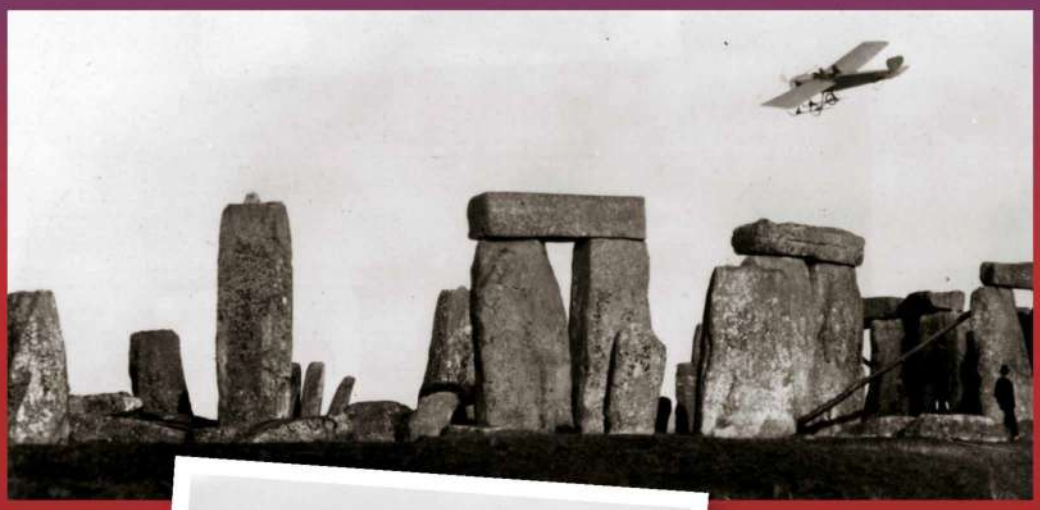
FIRST FLIGHTS, 1911

▶ In 1897, the War Office bought a huge swathe of land on Salisbury Plain, and military activity is ever-present around Stonehenge to this day. An airfield was built at nearby Durrington Down (renamed Larkhill) in 1909. Two years later – around the time this photograph was taken – the first British military aeroplane unit, No 2 (Aeroplane) Company of the Royal Engineers Air Battalion, was formed at Larkhill.

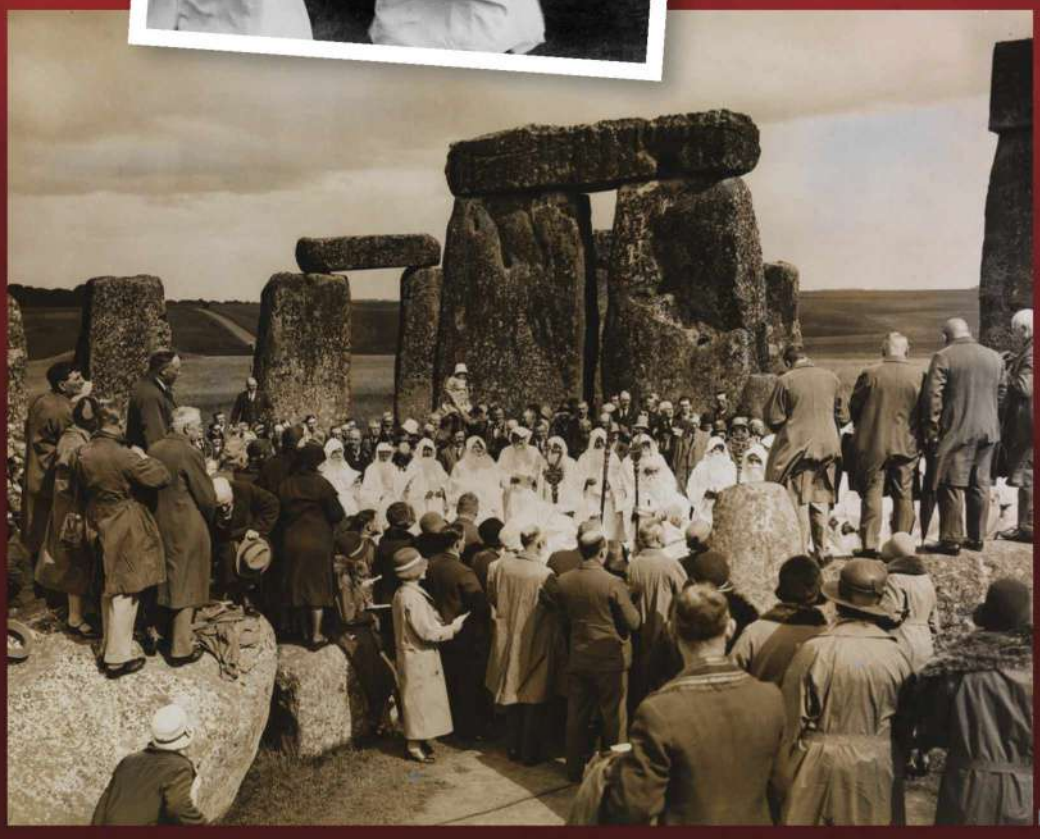


REVIVING ANCIENT RITES, 1930

◀ The Romantic movement of the 18th and 19th centuries sparked a revival of interest in Iron Age beliefs – or what modern people *thought* prehistoric folk believed. Druid organisations emerged, and members came to Stonehenge, particularly at the summer solstice (20 or 21 June). The self-professed druids in this picture are worshipping the Sun at the Heel Stone on the 1930 solstice.

THE HENGE CHANGES HANDS, 1915

▲ After Henry VIII took possession of the land on which Stonehenge stands when he dissolved Amesbury Abbey, the monument passed through various private hands. In 1915, it was bought at auction for £6,600 by local Wiltshire man Cecil Chubb, pictured above in 1926 with his wife, Mary. Three years later, he gave it to the nation; today it's in the guardianship of English Heritage.



ROCK AND ROLE, 1931

▶ The oldest of the modern organisations associated with prehistoric rituals is the Ancient Order of Druids, founded in London in 1781. Though it's essentially a social and philanthropic body, not based on neo-pagan beliefs, new arch-druids (leaders) have been inaugurated at Stonehenge – this picture shows CM Clark being invested in 1931. Various other neo-druid orders similarly use the site.

TOURIST TIDE, 1935

By the 1930s, monthly tourist numbers at Stonehenge surged up to 15,000 at their peak, and in 1935 an automatic turnstile was installed to replace human staff collecting admission fees. That year, a car park was installed on land owned by the National Trust, which today manages most of the surrounding area.

DID YOU KNOW?

VILLAGE PEOPLE

Recent excavations suggest that the people who erected the stones at the most famous henge may have lived at Durrington Walls, two miles northeast of Stonehenge itself. It's just part of the wider World Heritage landscape littered with prehistoric monuments.

LINTEL SCOOP, 1958

▲ Various parts of the monument have toppled over the many centuries since its construction, including a trilithon that fell in 1797. A major restoration project began in 1958, with work including lifting this 18-tonne lintel back into place on that long-fallen trilithon.

SECURING THE CIRCLE, 1958

◀ The restoration project of the late 1950s involved righting six fallen bluestones and setting a number of sarsen stones in concrete to prevent future movement, securing the structure of the monument for many years to come.

GETTY IMAGES X6, ALAMY X1

KEEP IT CLEAN, 1968

◀ Stonehenge has been a target for protesters over the years. In this photo taken in 1968, a worker scrubs a stone on which the slogan 'Free Wales' has been daubed. More recently, a large-scale campaign opposed plans to dig a tunnel near Stonehenge, claiming it would damage the site. It's even been suggested that the stone circle, parts of which were brought from southwest Wales 5,000 years ago, should be dismantled and rebuilt west of the border.

SQUATTERS' SITES, 1974

▲ A magnet for counterculture since the 1960s, in 1974 Stonehenge attracted a group of squatters who called themselves the 'Wallies of Wessex' after their figurehead, who adopted the name 'Wally Hope'.

FREE FESTIVAL, 1979

◀ For over a decade from the early 1970s, a free festival was held near Stonehenge each June. By the time it was last staged in 1984, the festival attracted tens of thousands of revellers to hear artists such as Hawkwind and Roy Harper.

WORDS: PAUL BLOOMFIELD

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Archaeologist Mike Pitts answers listeners' questions about Stonehenge in a special two-part episode of the *HistoryExtra* podcast from 2022. Stream both parts at *historyextra.com/stonehenge-qa*

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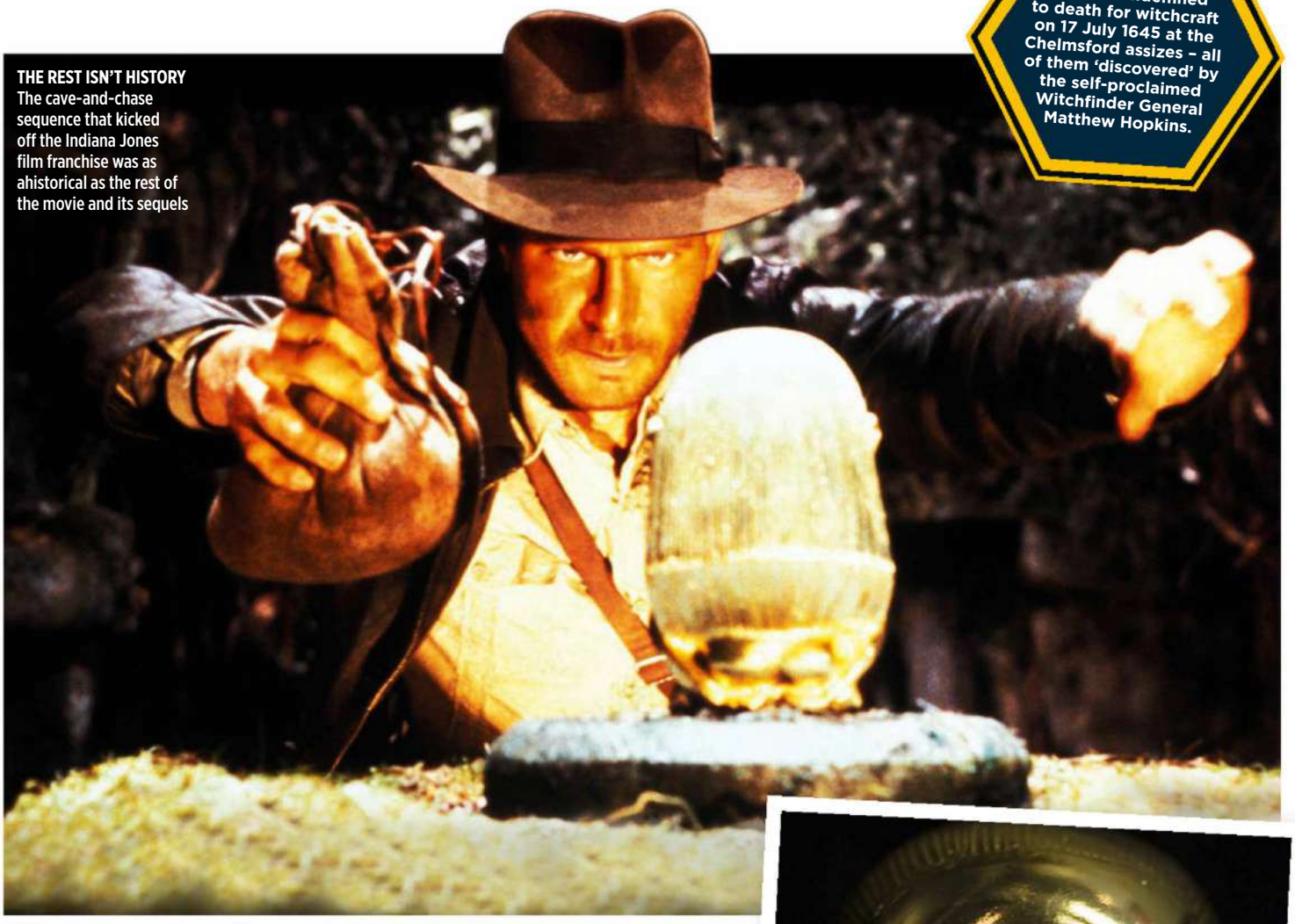
19
The number of women condemned to death for witchcraft on 17 July 1645 at the Chelmsford assizes – all of them 'discovered' by the self-proclaimed Witchfinder General Matthew Hopkins.



THE REST ISN'T HISTORY
The cave-and-chase sequence that kicked off the Indiana Jones film franchise was as ahistorical as the rest of the movie and its sequels

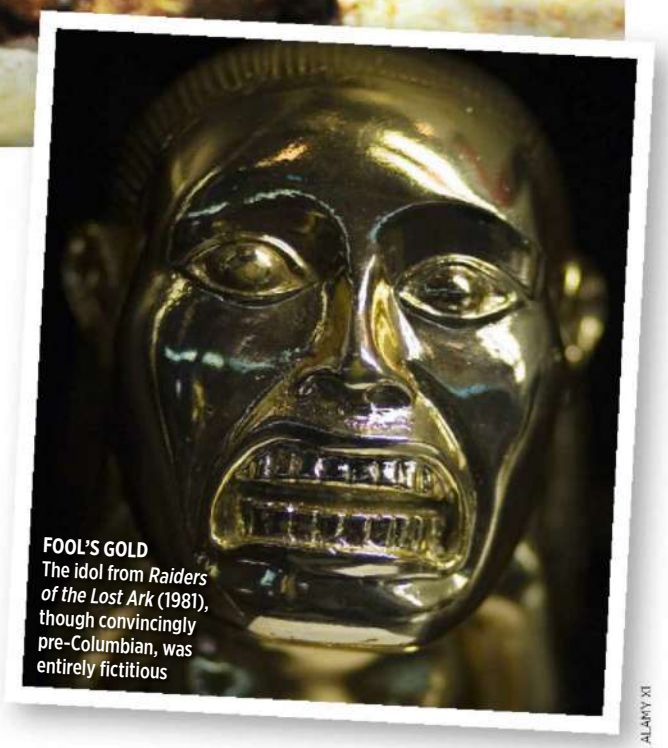
Was the Indiana Jones idol based on a real artefact?

SHORT ANSWER This is less a case of 'it belongs in a museum', more 'leave it to the movies'

LONG ANSWER In arguably one of the great movie opening sequences of all time, at the start of Steven Spielberg's 1981 romp *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the fedora-wearing, whip-wielding, globe-trotting archaeologist Indiana Jones treks through the South American jungle in search of a secret temple. Inside is a golden fertility idol, protected by a series of booby traps… and a giant boulder, of course.

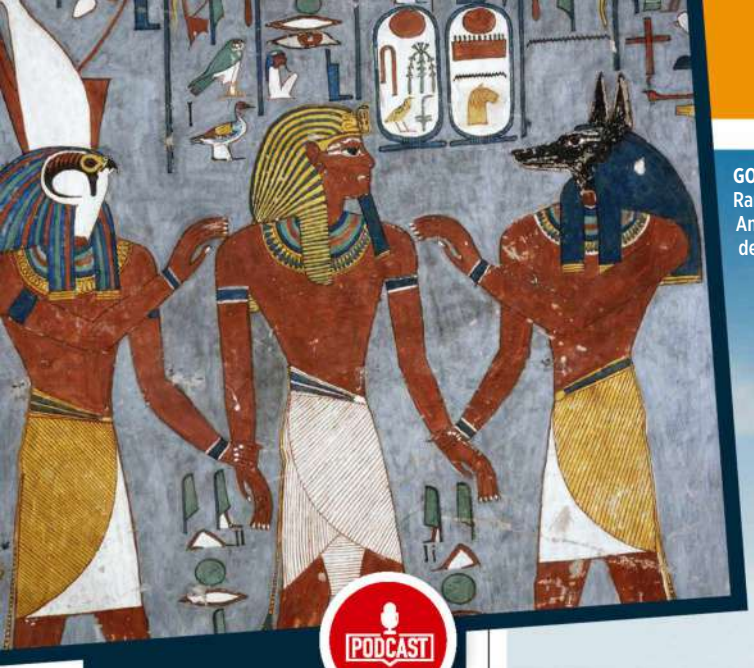
Though it may not even be the main MacGuffin of the movie – Indy has to race to find the Ark of the Covenant before it's discovered by the Nazis – this gilt idol has gone down in cinema history. But not in *real* history – because the artefact is entirely fictitious.

An Indiana Jones comic, published later, claimed that the idol represented a goddess of the Chachapoyas, a pre-Columbian Andean culture of what's now northwest Peru that fell to the Inca in the 15th century. The 'artefact' also looks similar to a sculpture carved from a gleaming mineral, held in the collections at Dumbarton Oaks, Washington DC, depicting a woman in the throes of childbirth. However, that has been attributed to the Aztec people – based in Mexico, some 2,000 miles northwest of Peru – and may even have been made in the 19th century.



FOOL'S GOLD
The idol from *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981), though convincingly pre-Columbian, was entirely fictitious

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X1



GONE TO THE DOG
Ramesses I with the falcon-headed deity Horus and Anubis, the jackal-headed god of funerary rites, depicted on a wall in the pharaoh's tomb

PODCAST

Why did the gods of ancient Egypt have animal heads?

Answered by Joyce Tyldesley, professor of Egyptology at the University of Manchester

When travellers such as Herodotus visited Egypt in the classical age, they often described its religion as strange and primitive. In fact, the ancient Egyptians had refined an esoteric and rich belief system over 3,000 years.

Many Egyptian gods and goddesses had animal features: there was Sobek, with his crocodile-like appearance, and Hathor, often depicted with cow horns. However, the Egyptians probably did not actually envision their deities as animal-headed humanoids. Rather, artists depicted most of these gods as humans performing various functions, sometimes adorned with animal heads that symbolised the fundamental nature peculiar to each deity. This representation conveyed the gods' divine patronage and attributes to onlookers. Because most Egyptians could not read or write, this visual shorthand likely served as a powerful medium to express the complexities of their beliefs, and to enable people to comprehend them by reference to the behaviour of creatures that dwelt among them.

▶ To hear more from Professor Joyce Tyldesley about ancient Egypt's beliefs, visit *historyextra.com/egypt-religion-pod*

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X2

12

The number of humans who have walked on the Moon to date. The first was Neil Armstrong in 1969; the last to leave his footprints there was Gene Cernan in 1972.

Why is Cornwall called Cornwall?

Answered by **Tim Hannigan**, author of *The Granite Kingdom: A Cornish Journey* (Bloomsbury, 2023)

PODCAST

The latter part of the modern, English name for Cornwall is derived from the Old English or Anglo-Saxon word *wēalas*, which also happens to be the origin of the English name for Wales. Though often translated as 'foreigner', it is in fact better understood as meaning 'not us' or 'them', and was applied by the Anglo-Saxons to the peoples who dwelt in the lands corresponding with Wales and Cornwall today. In contrast, the Welsh name for Wales (Cymru) and the Cornish name for Cornwall (Kernow) are both Proto-Celtic in origin, rooted in the Brythonic languages spoken throughout Great Britain since the Iron Age.

The 'corn' element in Cornwall most likely stems from Kernow, though that word's precise meaning is less clear. It has been speculated it derives from the Latin word *cornu*, meaning horn. This may have been inspired by the shape of the peninsula that Cornwall occupies at the southwestern tip of Great Britain; a horn-like projection jutting out into the Atlantic. Based on this evidence, Cornwall might thus have a compound etymology, and be understood as denoting 'the foreigners of the horn-like peninsula' – a meaning that underlined both its otherness and its detachment from Anglo-Saxon territory.

▶ To hear more from Tim Hannigan about Cornwall's history, visit *historyextra.com/cornwall-pod*

OUT ON A LIMB
Cornwall was sometimes also known as 'West Wales' by the Anglo-Saxons, as seen in this map depicting some of the kingdoms of Great Britain as they appeared during the ninth century AD

IBERIAN OVERTHROW
Islamic invaders defeated the Visigothic rulers of what's now Spain over a period of eight years

When did the 'Moors' invade Spain?

SHORT ANSWER Taking advantage of Visigothic infighting, Muslim forces arrived in AD 711 – and stayed nearly eight centuries

LONG ANSWER The first thing to say is that 'Moor' wasn't a distinct ethnic group but a catch-all term for Muslim peoples used in Christian Europe during the medieval period. It referred particularly to those who invaded and settled the Iberian Peninsula (now Spain and Portugal) during a conquest launched under the Umayyad Caliphate based in Damascus.

In AD 711, Berbers from north Africa – itself conquered by the Umayyads not long before – crossed to Iberia under the command of Tariq ibn Ziyad. (The name of Gibraltar, where they landed, derives from *Jabal Tariq*, 'Mount of Tariq'). Helped by squabbles among the region's Visigothic nobles, the invaders defeated King Roderic at the battle of Guadalete and occupied his capital, Toledo.

Over the following seven to eight years, most of the peninsula fell and the Islamic province known as al-Andalus was established. Moorish rule lasted for most of the next eight centuries, finally ending with the fall of Granada in 1492.

5

The number of days that the newborn infant John I reigned as king of France in 1316. His father had died before his birth, so he became known as John the Posthumous.

PODCAST

What was the Mechanical Turk?

Answered by **Michael Wooldridge**, professor of computer science at the University of Oxford

The Mechanical Turk, constructed by Wolfgang von Kempelen in 1770 to impress Austrian empress Maria Theresa, was a remarkable automaton dressed in Ottoman attire that enthralled spectators. It appeared to be a chess-playing marvel, capable of challenging human opponents and even solving complex puzzles such as the 'knight's tour' sequence of moves. However, the Turk's true ingenuity lay in its illusion. Challengers believed that they were competing against a sophisticated machine, but the reality was quite different. A human concealed inside the contraption controlled its movements and played against the challengers, leaving them astonished and intrigued. With the present-day rise of AI technology, the Mechanical Turk serves as a reminder of our long fascination with devices that possess the ability to mimic human intelligence.

▶ To hear more from Professor Michael Wooldridge about the history of AI, visit *historyextra.com/ai-history*

SUSPECT DEVICE
A hidden man was the real chess-playing brains behind the Mechanical Turk, not an intelligent automaton

PUT A SOCK IN IT
The Pets.com advert filmed for Super Bowl XXXIV, costing millions of dollars, was just one example of dot-com bubble extravagance

PODCAST

What caused the dot-com crash?

Answered by **Dr Linda Yueh**, fellow in economics at the University of Oxford and adjunct professor of economics at the London Business School

The advent of the new millennium was a period of excitement about the internet and e-commerce. The so-called 'dot-com bubble' began with a surge of investment in internet start-ups, driven by the novelty of buying and selling goods online. However, this led to companies spending vast amounts on ambitious launch campaigns that often lacked a clear link to the commercialisation of products.

For example, in the US in 2000, Pets.com spent millions of dollars on an advertisement featuring a sock puppet that appeared in a prime-time slot during Super Bowl XXXIV. Others splurged on extravagant websites that failed to load adequately at a time when most people relied on slow dial-up internet connections.

The bubble burst in 2000, triggering a recession. Among the lessons learned from the crash was the risk of 'irrational exuberance' and the need for caution when investing in new trends. It served as a stark reminder that what goes up must inevitably come down.

▶ To hear more from Dr Linda Yueh on economic crashes, visit *historyextra.com/dotcom-pod*

THE ROYAL DANISH COLLECTION, ROSENBORG CASTLE, COPENHAGEN X1, GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2

SHELL TOOT
Mary Anning (*left, in a 19th-century portrait*) was a pioneering fossil-hunter – but *not* the inspiration for the old tongue-twister or song

Who sold seashells by the seashore?

SHORT ANSWER Claims that the woman in question was Mary Anning can be compared to one of her great finds: a load of old poo

LONG ANSWER "She sells seashells by the seashore. The shells she sells are seashells, I'm sure. So if she sells seashells on the seashore, Then I'm sure she sells seashore shells." So goes the old tongue-twister. Hopefully, many of you reading this will have tried to recite it aloud, with mixed success – though you hopefully *didn't* also voice the widespread claim that the seashore-seashell-seller in question was Mary Anning.

A 19th-century fossil collector in Lyme Regis, on Dorset's stretch of the Jurassic Coast, Anning is now celebrated as a pioneering figure in the nascent field of palaeontology. In 1811, when she was about 12, Anning, along with her older brother, Joseph, discovered the first ichthyosaur. She later discovered the first complete plesiosaur in 1823 as well as coprolites – fossilised faeces. Yet, as a working-class woman with little formal education, her achievements went largely unrecognised.

Those now-famous words were put to music in 1908 by Terry Sullivan and Harry Gifford, who were reputedly inspired by Anning at a time when her legacy was becoming better understood. Yes, she did sell items at her seaside shop, Anning's Fossil Depot – but there is no evidence linking her with the tongue-twister. And the key phrases predate Sullivan, too, having appeared decades earlier in Alexander Melville Bell's 1855 book *Letters and Sounds: An Introduction to English Reading*.

DID YOU KNOW?

CAT GOT THEIR TONGUE
In 1895, Marvin R Clark published *Pussy and Her Language* – which included 'translations' of cat 'words' such as *lae* (milk), *ptlee-bl* (mouse meat) and *purrieu* (satisfaction or content).

BLESS YOU
The ancient Greek physician Soranus wrote that a woman could avoid pregnancy by holding her breath during intercourse, then squatting and sneezing. He also recommended drinking something cold before sex.

GRAFFITI GOLD
Having fallen out of favour with the powerful Medici family in Florence, Michelangelo went into hiding in a room beneath the Basilica di San Lorenzo. There he doodled pictures on the walls, discovered only in 1975.

BRAVEHEART VS SLEEPYHEAD
William Wallace won his great victory over the English at the battle of Stirling Bridge in 1297 – but it could have gone very differently, had his enemy not been delayed when their commander, the Earl of Surrey, overslept.

What happened to the Montevideo Maru?

SHORT ANSWER The US sinking of a Japanese ship during WWII turned into a terrible tragedy for the Allies

LONG ANSWER In April 2023, deep-sea explorers discovered the wreck of the *Montevideo Maru*, a Japanese transport ship sunk off the Philippines during World War II. Torpedoed by the American submarine USS *Sturgeon* on 1 July 1942, it went down in just 11 minutes.

The news was poignant not just for Japan but also for Australia. Unbeknownst to the US sub, the unmarked ship carried Allied prisoners of war captured in Papua New Guinea, nearly all Australian; more than 1,000 perished – representing Australia's worst maritime disaster in terms of lives lost. But the *Montevideo Maru* was far from the only Japanese 'hell ship' sunk with PoWs aboard. Between 12 and 18 September 1944 alone, three ships went down, killing more than 7,000.

What was the 'trouser watering chair'?

This 17th-century seat was a Danish king's puerile practical joke

SHORT ANSWER Like a whoopee cushion and a squirting flower rolled into one 17th-century chair

LONG ANSWER Visitors to Rosenborg Castle in Copenhagen, be warned: do NOT sit on a plush red velvet-covered chair. It's a peculiar practical joke left over from the reign of Frederick III in the 17th century. On being occupied, cords come out of the armrests to bind the sitter's arms. The joker then pulls a ring on the backrest to release water into the victim's lap, hence the name: *Buksevandsstol* – literally, 'trouser watering chair'. Water trickles down another pipe into a tin bowl, making it sound as if the person in the seat is peeing into a potty. Finally, a trumpet in the seat parps to mimic flatulence.

Why did Poland battle the Virgin Mary?

PODCAST

Answered by **Jacob Mikanowski**, author of *Goodbye Eastern Europe* (Oneworld, 2023)

Not long after the communist regimes of eastern Europe were established in the late 1940s, the authorities in the self-proclaimed 'atheist states' found themselves confronting the Virgin Mary. A wave of miracles and apparitions swept across the region, and the historically Catholic state of Poland witnessed a large proportion, attracting thousands of pilgrims. This caused a big headache for Poland's ruling communist party, and its secret police were even given handbooks containing advice on how to disperse gatherings and destroy shrines.

One notable incident occurred in 1949 when a nun witnessed a copy of Poland's most revered icon of the Madonna weeping in Lublin Cathedral, igniting a spontaneous mass outpouring of devotion. The communist regime mounted a vituperative propaganda campaign that portrayed pilgrims as illiterate peasants manipulated by clerics in league with Poland's enemies abroad. But these impromptu displays of religious fervour simply highlighted the regime's inability to marshal society and supplant much older idols.

▶ To hear more from Jacob Mikanowski on the history of eastern Europe, visit *historyextra.com/eastern-europe-pod*

2.5

The estimated percentage of people living on the Italian peninsula who spoke Italian when the Kingdom of Italy was established in 1861. Most inhabitants spoke local dialects or other languages.

MIRACULOUS MARY
The medieval Black Madonna of Częstochowa is one of several icons credited with miracles in Poland – some of which sparked outpourings of religious devotion that alarmed the country's postwar communist regime

TOPFOTO X1, ALAMY X2

How has the way we visualise extraterrestrials changed over the years?

PODCAST

Answered by **David Clarke**, associate professor in the Department of Culture and Media at Sheffield Hallam University

Humanity's perception of what alien life forms and UFOs might look like has undergone subtle shifts over the past century or so. In 1893, HG Wells' satire *The Man of the Year Million* envisioned future humans with massive heads and huge eyes but tiny bodies. This bears more than a passing resemblance to the most recognisable rendering of an extraterrestrial being: the so-called 'grey' alien. Later, Steven Spielberg's 1977 blockbuster film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* and Whitley Strieber's 1987 book *Communion* helped reinforce this template of a small, big-headed creature with huge eyes, and ingrained it into popular culture.

During the mid-20th century, though, eyewitnesses reported aliens of diverse forms, including blonde-haired angelic beings and hairy, red-eyed creatures. Even alien spacecraft changed shape as the century progressed. The term 'flying saucer' was coined in 1947 after a claimed sighting by US aviator Kenneth Arnold, and saucer-shaped UFOs dominated eyewitness testimonies for years. In the 1990s, triangular-shaped UFOs gained popularity, following TV shows such as *The X-Files* as well as advances in stealth aircraft design. Recently, Tic Tac-shaped phenomena have become vogue following unexplained sightings by US Navy pilots over the Pacific. The ever-changing imagery of extraterrestrials and UFOs attests to the influence of popular culture on our collective imagination.

▶ To hear more from Professor David Clarke on extraterrestrials and popular culture, visit *historyextra.com/extraterrestrials-pod*

LITTLE GREY MEN
The small, large-headed, big-eyed extraterrestrials in Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* echo HG Wells' description of future humans in an 1893 short story – and countless other depictions in books, films and TV shows over the following century

SHAPE-SHIFTING SPACECRAFT
US aviator Kenneth Arnold holds a picture based on his description of a batwing-shaped craft he saw in Washington state in 1947

CELLULOID COWBOYS
The first movie filmed in Hollywood, *In Old California*, was a 17-minute silent Western

700
The number of symbols used in the ancient Sumerian writing system. Probably in use before 3,300 BC, it spread to Babylonia, Assyria and Persia, evolving into Cuneiform.

What was the first film shot in Hollywood?

SHORT ANSWER The motion-picture industry's move to Tinsel Town began with the production of a historical Western

LONG ANSWER At first, the great American inventor Thomas Edison, whose company produced early movie cameras at the end of the 19th century, dominated the industry like a mob boss. To escape the rules and fees imposed by the Edison Trust, which was based on the US east coast, filmmakers upped sticks and moved as far away as possible – settling on the west coast. There, among the farms and orchards of California, they found cheaper land and a climate more conducive to year-round film-making.

The new town of Hollywood, only established in 1887, was the ideal setting for a 17-minute silent Western about California under Mexican rule earlier that century. Titled *In Old California*, the 1910 short directed by DW Griffith – now best known for his controversial 1915 epic *The Birth of a Nation*, which glorified the Ku Klux Klan – was thus the first film shot in Tinsel Town.

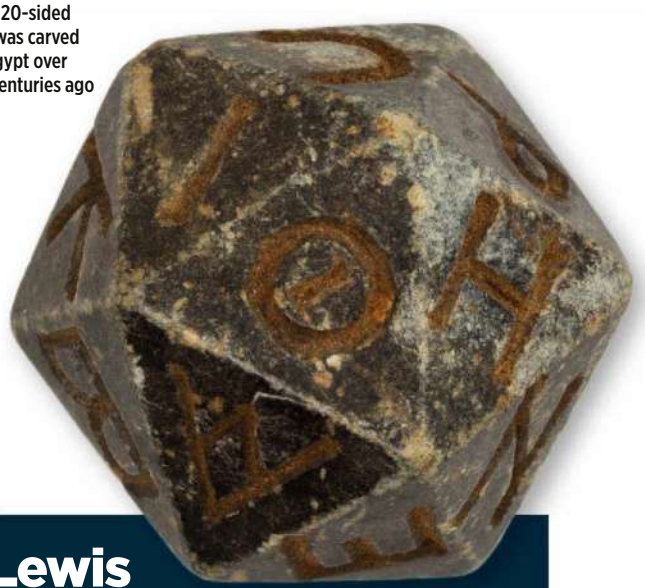
How old is the 20-sided die?

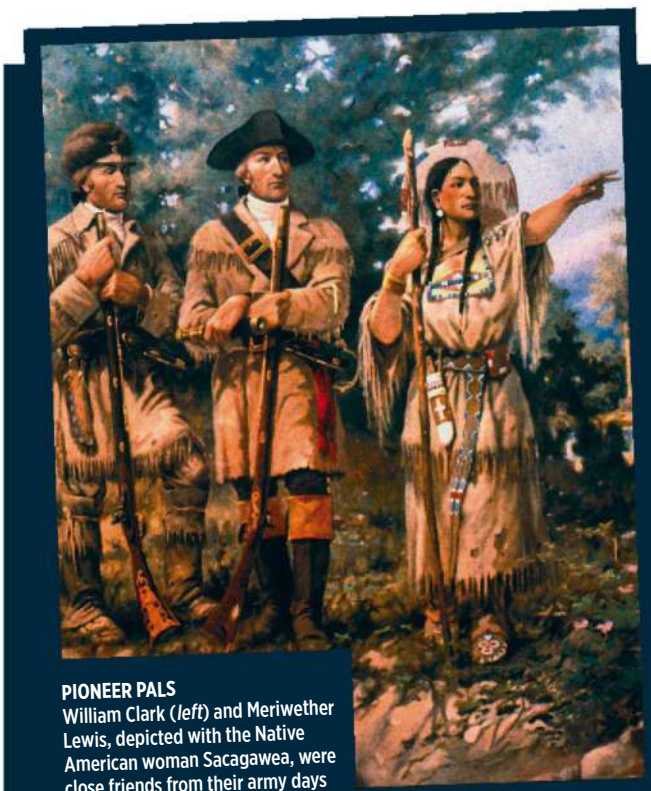
SHORT ANSWER Look to the Ptolemaic kingdom – which itself sounds a little like a realm in Dungeons & Dragons

LONG ANSWER Among the most important requirements for a game of Dungeons & Dragons – other than a fertile imagination – is the D20, a 20-sided die. Astonishingly, early tabletop gamers were using ancient versions of the D20 many centuries before the advent of D&D in 1974.

Perhaps the oldest example, dating from the Ptolemaic period of Egypt (332 BC to AD 30), was carved from serpentinite and inscribed with a Greek letter on each face; we can only guess what it was used for. Another die found in the 1980s at Dakhleh Oasis in Egypt's Western Desert contains the names of gods in Demotic script, prompting a theory that it may have been used for divination – handy for a game of D&D...

TAKING SIDES
This 20-sided die was carved in Egypt over 20 centuries ago





PIONEER PALS
William Clark (*left*) and Meriwether Lewis, depicted with the Native American woman Sacagawea, were close friends from their army days

How did Lewis and Clark meet?

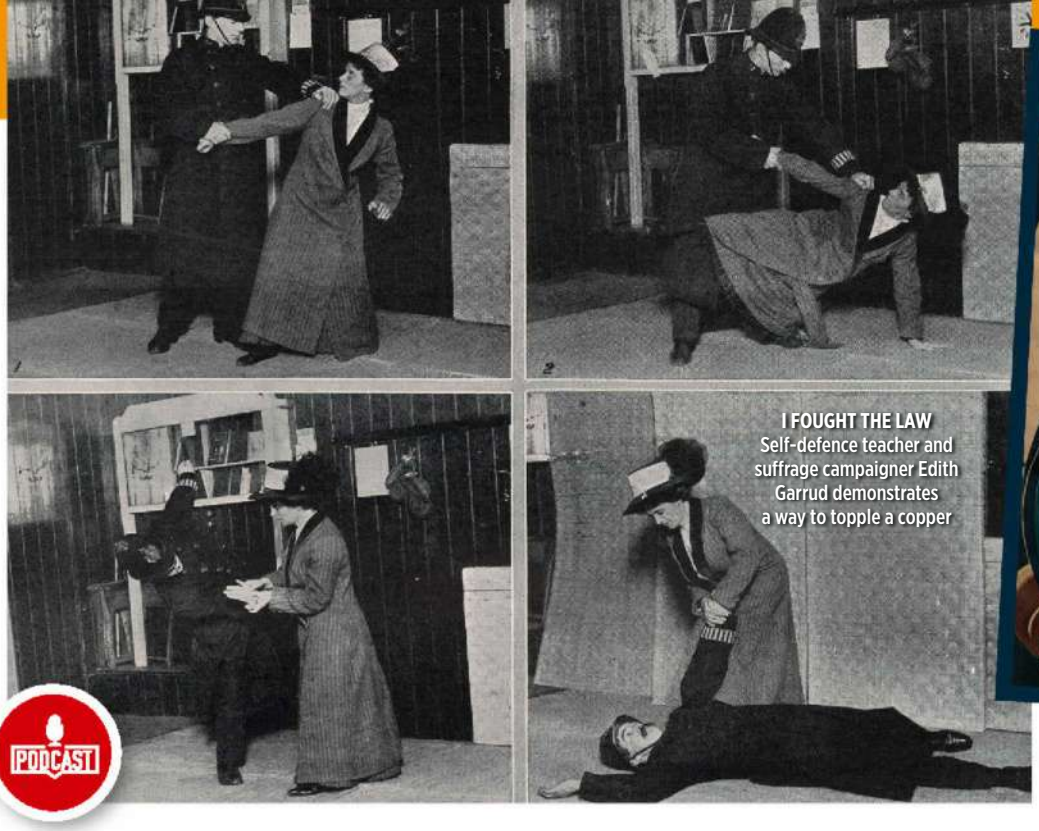
SHORT ANSWER A military court-martial turned out to be the beginning of a beautiful friendship

LONG ANSWER Between 1804 and 1806, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark led a pioneering expedition across North America, tramping 8,000 miles from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean and back. Enduring harsh terrain and weather, diseases, hunger and encounters with Native American tribes, the pair worked together seamlessly.

This would surely have been impossible without their deep and lasting friendship, which began in 1795. Lewis, then 21 and an officer in the US Army, had been court-martialled for challenging a compatriot to a duel while drunk, and transferred to another company. Happily, he got on well with his new commander, Clark.

The pair grew so close that when President Thomas Jefferson appointed Lewis to lead the Corps of Discovery Expedition, Clark was immediately brought on board. In practice, the two men shared command of the expedition, calling one other 'captain' throughout the long, arduous journey.

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X3



I FOUGHT THE LAW
Self-defence teacher and suffrage campaigner Edith Garrud demonstrates a way to topple a copper

PODCAST

Did the suffragettes practise jujitsu?

Answered by Dr Emelyne Godfrey, author of *Mrs Pankhurst's Bodyguard* (The History Press, 2023)

At the turn of the 20th century, entrepreneur Edward William Barton-Wright helped popularise Japanese martial arts in Britain. He even developed his own form, called 'Bartitsu', to which the novelist Arthur Conan Doyle attributed Sherlock Holmes' victory over his arch-nemesis, Moriarty. Barton-Wright's *dojo* (a hall in which martial arts are practised) attracted experts from around the world, who taught self-defence to both men and women.

One devotee was William Garrud, who learned from Japanese practitioner Sadakazu Uyenishi and then passed on that knowledge to his wife, Edith Garrud. Edith, or Madame Garrud as she preferred to be known, became a powerhouse in the women's suffrage movement. She offered jujitsu lessons to suffragettes in her own *dojo*, and raised public awareness through demonstrations during which she would effortlessly throw a volunteer dressed as a constable over her shoulder.

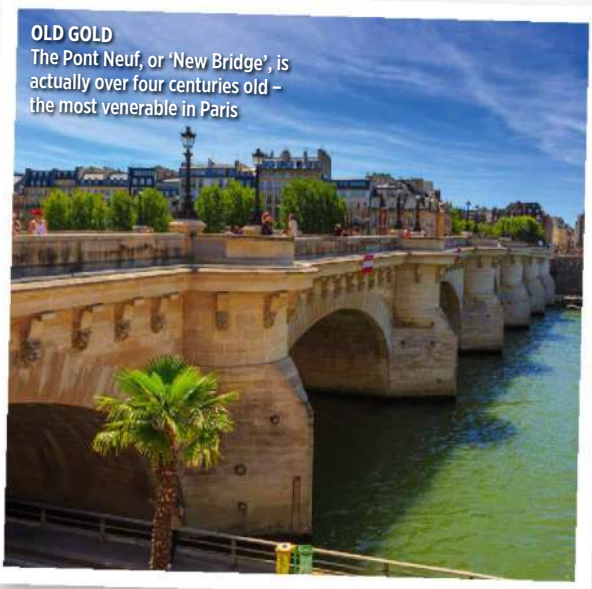
Increasingly manhandled by police officers, many of whom were trained in martial arts, the suffragettes resolved to level the field. Jujitsu became a crucial weapon in their arsenal, along with stones, Indian clubs and cardboard body armour worn under their clothing, providing them with ways of deflecting the state's efforts to physically coerce them. The adoption of jujitsu was a testament to the sheer determination and resourcefulness that was vital in the long battle for women's suffrage.

▶ To hear more from Dr Emelyne Godfrey on suffragette self-defence, visit *historyextra.com/suffragette-jujitsu-pod*

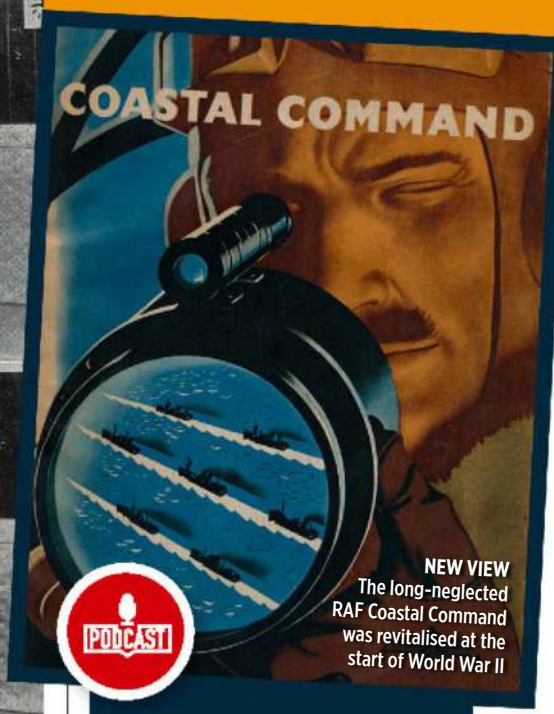
Why is Paris's oldest bridge called New Bridge?

SHORT ANSWER It was new when first built, after all

LONG ANSWER The oldest bridge over the River Seine in Paris is, curiously, the Pont Neuf – 'New Bridge'. Construction took a fair while: it was started in May 1578, during the reign of Henry III, but the span wasn't inaugurated till 1607, following a lengthy Wars-of-Religion-enforced break – when it was truly the 'new bridge'. Its beauty, reputation and location – linking the Île de la Cité, birthplace of Paris and home to Notre-Dame cathedral, with the Left and Right Banks of the Seine – ensured that it continued to stand while other bridges fell. Over time, the 'new' became old, even if the name didn't change.



OLD GOLD
The Pont Neuf, or 'New Bridge', is actually over four centuries old – the most venerable in Paris



NEW VIEW
The long-neglected RAF Coastal Command was revitalised at the start of World War II

PODCAST

Why was part of the Royal Air Force once likened to Cinderella?

Answered by Leo McKinstry, author of *Cinderella Boys* (John Murray, 2023)

Coastal Command, the maritime arm of the RAF, was once known as the 'Cinderella Service' because of the neglect and scarcity of resources it suffered prior to World War II. Founded in 1936 alongside Fighter and Bomber Command, it endured a chronic lack of attention, and was soon overshadowed by the other two, whose potential for strategic strikes were more closely aligned with the ethos of Hugh Trenchard, the man who helped establish the RAF.

When war broke out in 1939, Coastal Command was relying on insufficient numbers of obsolete biplanes. As the conflict intensified, German U-boats began wreaking havoc throughout the Atlantic. Recognising the desperate situation, the British government finally allocated more resources to the 'Cinderella Service'. With modern equipment, Coastal Command became a formidable fighting force, contributing significantly to the Allied victory, notably during the battle of the Atlantic and D-Day operations.

▶ To hear more from Leo McKinstry on RAF Coastal Command, visit *historyextra.com/cinderella-service-pod*

DARK CLOUD
J Robert Oppenheimer was horrified at the devastation atomic bombs wreaked on Hiroshima and Nagasaki

PODCAST

How did Oppenheimer react when atomic bombs were dropped on Japan?

Answered by **Kai Bird**, co-author of *American Prometheus* (Knopf, 2005)

After the 'Trinity' test, the first successful detonation of an atomic weapon, in July 1945, J Robert Oppenheimer – the American physicist who had directed the research into its development – felt elated by the fulfilment of his objective. However, when details of the devastation wreaked on Hiroshima and Nagasaki emerged, the so-called 'father of the atomic bomb' fell into a deep depression. His wife, Kitty, feared for his life and, though he recovered, he remained haunted by the bombings.

During his meeting with President Harry S Truman the following month, Oppenheimer had stressed that international regulation was needed to prevent the proliferation of atomic bombs. Truman, unaware that scientists worldwide would understand the physics behind the weapon, dismissed Oppenheimer's concerns. The physicist's dismay motivated him to condemn the bomb's use, and to call publicly for measures to safeguard humanity. His courageous efforts to raise awareness of the danger of his creation sparked vitriolic political pushback.

▶ To hear more from Kai Bird on Oppenheimer, visit *historyextra.com/oppenheimer-pod*

DOOMED LOVE
Olivia Hussey and Leonard Whiting played the ill-fated couple in Franco Zeffirelli's 1968 film – complete with balcony

4

The number of major sporting events – the Pythian, Nemean, Isthmian and Olympic games – staged in honour of the ancient Greeks' patron deities.

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X1

Did Juliet really have a balcony in Romeo and Juliet?

PODCAST

Answered by **Dr Sophie Duncan**, research fellow at the University of Oxford and author of *Searching for Juliet* (Hachette, 2023)

Contrary to popular belief, the female protagonist of William Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet* does not appear to her future lover on a balcony. Rather, in the playwright's original text, she regales him from a window. That's because balconies as we know them today did not exist in 16th-century England, when Shakespeare was making his name. It was not until 1611 that the concept of a balcony was first introduced to England, through a travel guide to Italy and France written by Thomas Coryat in which he described little terraces protruding from buildings.

Moreover, the famous balcony that lures tourists to the Italian city of Verona today has nothing to do with Shakespeare. It was added to the house in the 1930s after a Hollywood film adaptation of the play inspired a local architect to affix the stone panel from a medieval sarcophagus to the building. The popular association of Juliet with a balcony comes from the 18th-century actor David Garrick, who modified the famous window scene for a performance. Yet, despite its absence from Shakespeare's text, the image of Juliet standing on a balcony has become an iconic and enduring symbol of doomed love, inextricable from the play itself.

▶ To hear more from Dr Sophie Duncan on Shakespeare's Juliet, visit *historyextra.com/juliet-pod*

TOMB WITH A VIEW 'Juliet's balcony' in Verona is a panel from a medieval tomb added to the house in the 1930s

HOUSE RAP
Black Rod uses his eponymous staff during the State Opening of Parliament

PODCAST

Who is Black Rod?

Answered by Dr Stephen Roberts, emeritus director of the History of Parliament Trust

Established around 1361, the role of Black Rod – formally: 'The Gentleman (or, occasionally, Lady) Usher of the Black Rod' – is prominent within the House of Lords, where he or she is tasked with keeping order and controlling access to the chamber and its surroundings.

One tradition, probably dating back to the 17th century, involves Black Rod summoning MPs from the House of Commons to the House of Lords for the State Opening of Parliament. During this dramatic ritual, the doors to the Commons are slammed in Black Rod's face, symbolising the chamber's independence. After being denied entry, Black Rod knocks their eponymous ceremonial staff on the door three times until it is finally opened, whereupon they are now permitted to enter. After addressing the Speaker, they then lead the members of the Commons through the Palace of Westminster to the House of Lords, where they listen to the present monarch's speech laying out the British government's upcoming legislative agenda.

▶ To hear more from Dr Stephen Roberts on the history of parliament, visit *historyextra.com/parliament-pod*

170

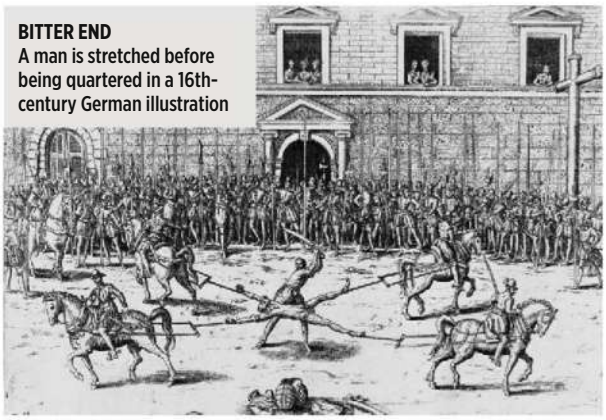
The number of men required to row a trireme – an ancient Athenian war galley – powering it at speeds of seven to nine knots.

Who was the first person to be hanged, drawn and quartered in Britain?

SHORT ANSWER A 13th-century pirate was the first to suffer such a brutal execution, reserved for the most treasonous of traitors

LONG ANSWER Dragged from a hurdle to a place of execution by a horse, hanged to the point of death before being lowered and disembowelled, and finally ripped into pieces to be displayed publicly – no wonder those in medieval England described being hanged, drawn and quartered as 'Godly butchery'.

The first known victim was a nobleman's son, William Marise, convicted of piracy in 1241, when it constituted a heinous crime against the nation. Indeed, the execution was deemed so horrific that it was reserved only for the worst of traitors – men such as Welsh rebel prince Dafydd ap Gruffydd and Scottish independence leader William Wallace – and never for women, who were beheaded or burned at the stake instead. Horrifyingly, 'Godly butchery' wasn't abolished until 1870.



BITTER END
A man is stretched before being quartered in a 16th-century German illustration

What did it mean to suffer 'damnatio memoriae'?

SHORT ANSWER To paraphrase the old adage, history is written – and rewritten – by the victors

LONG ANSWER Statues torn down, paintings defaced, writings expunged, properties seized, the very mention of a person's name outlawed: to be subjected to *damnatio memoriae* – Latin meaning 'condemnation of memory' – meant to be removed from history. Evidence of the posthumous punishment can be seen throughout history, from the eradication of the reign of the 'heretical' Egyptian pharaoh Akhenaten to Joseph Stalin's doctoring of photos to remove those he ordered to be purged.

The act is associated with ancient Rome, where despised emperors such as Caligula, Nero and Elagabalus suffered this fate. In the early third century, Caracalla attempted to expunge all mention of his brother (and co-emperor) Geta. Indeed, Geta's face was scratched out on a painting of the two with their father, Septimius Severus, as far away as Egypt (*pictured, left*). The fact that Geta's name – and those of countless others – is still known today suggests that *damnatio memoriae* wasn't always wholly successful.

LOSING FACE
Features of a boy thought to be Geta, son of emperor Septimius Severus, were scratched out

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X3

PROPERTY IS THEFT
Monopoly is based on an earlier game created by Lizzie Magie (*inset*) – who was uncredited

Who invented Monopoly?

SHORT ANSWER The game can end friendships and start fights. Well, Lizzie Magie tried to warn us

LONG ANSWER The aim of the world's bestselling board game is well known: to make as much money as possible by buying and developing properties, while driving competitors to bankruptcy – and to the point where they might flip the game off the table in frustration.

Charles B Darrow, a down-on-his-luck American engineer, sold the concept to Parker Brothers in 1935, and it quickly became a Depression-era success story. In truth, though, he had not invented the game himself.

More than three decades earlier, in 1904, Elizabeth (Lizzie) J Magie was granted a patent for her creation, The Landlord's Game; two decades later, she patented a revised version. Lizzie Magie bucked the norms of her gender by living and working independently. She was a writer, stage performer and feminist, and she designed her game to reflect her progressive economic views – the original aim of The Landlord's Game being to warn people of the *dangers* of monopolies.

Magie's game enjoyed word-of-mouth success over the next few decades, particularly among college students. Then, on a fateful evening, Darrow came to play a version at a friend's house. Parker Brothers had initially declined to publish Magie's game back in 1909, but in 1936 the company bought out her patent for just $500. Meanwhile, Darrow made millions from a corrupted version of her game. It's easy to see who was the winner there.

How much did Georgian bankers earn?

Answered by Anne Murphy, professor of history at the University of Portsmouth

In Georgian Britain, bankers made a modest living. At the Bank of England, the entry-level annual wage of £50 had remained unchanged since 1694, despite periods of inflation. This meagre income made it challenging for bankers to improve their social status or even to marry. It was only after a decade of service that their lifestyles could become more comfortable: senior bankers could expect to receive a salary of £250–£300 per annum, along with a generous pension.

However, despite the modest pay, additional income opportunities did exist: public-facing clerks received tips from customers, and some became stock-brokers to supplement their earnings.

▶ To hear more from Professor Anne Murphy on Georgian bankers, visit *historyextra.com/georgian-bank-pod*

NO-FORTUNE TELLERS
Thomas Rolandson's 1792 etching *The Bank*. Georgian bankers earned relatively little

Who plotted to kidnap Edward VI?

SHORT ANSWER One power-hungry man challenged his own brother for royal access

LONG ANSWER Edward VI was nine when he came to the throne in 1547, and he died less than six years later – but a lot happened during his reign to create enemies. There were uprisings in Cornwall, Devon and Norfolk, war with Scotland, and religious upheaval as he cemented Protestantism in England.

When a plot against him did emerge, though, it came from within his family. On the death of Henry VIII, Edward's ambitious uncle, Edward Seymour, had been appointed Protector – and made no attempt to hide the fact that he really wielded power. As a result, Seymour quarrelled with his own brother, Thomas, over access to the young king. To swing the balance in his favour, Thomas attempted to abduct Edward VI, creeping into Hampton Court Palace on the night of 16 January 1549 – but disturbed the king's pet spaniel, which began barking. Killing the dog, Thomas made his escape, only to be arrested the next day. ⊙

FAMILY VIES
Edward VI depicted in 1546 – three years before his uncle tried to abduct him

HISTORY EXTRA PODCAST

LISTEN
To access all the podcast episodes mentioned in this month's Miscellany section, visit *historyextra.com/miscellany* or scan the QR code

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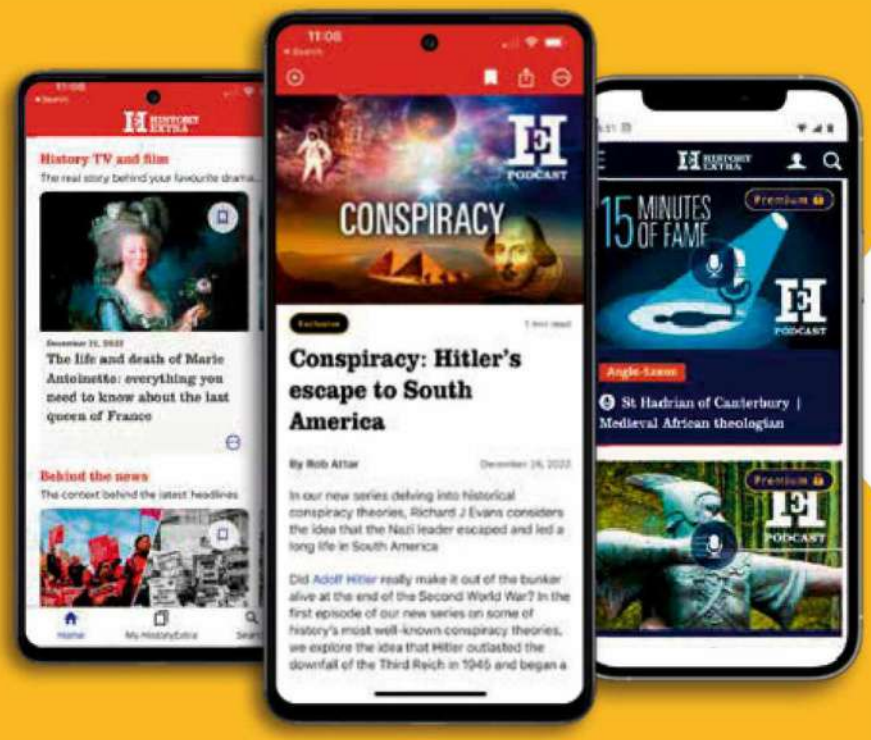
History TV and film
The life and death of Marie Antoinette: everything you need to know about the last queen of France
Behind the news
CONSPIRACY
Conspiracy: Hitler's escape to South America
15 MINUTES OF FAME
St Hadrian of Canterbury | Medieval African theologian

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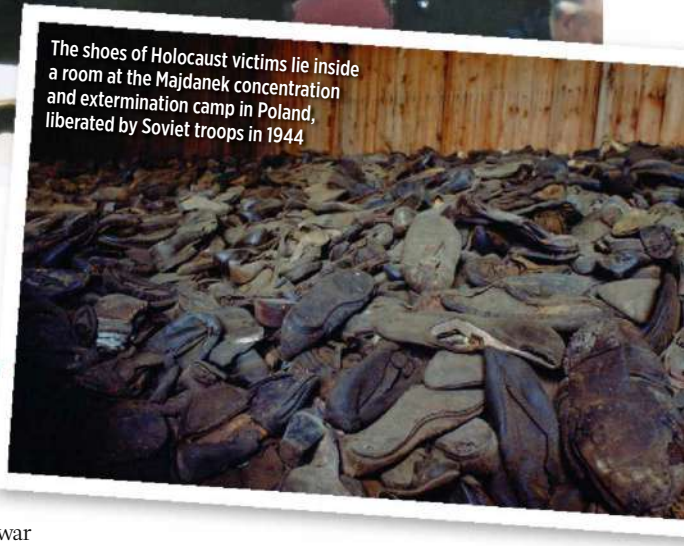
ONE TO WATCH

The new series of BBC Two's *Rise of the Nazis* documents the Nuremberg Trials of 1945–46, when senior figures within Hitler's regime were brought to justice



The shoes of Holocaust victims lie inside a room at the Majdanek concentration and extermination camp in Poland, liberated by Soviet troops in 1944

Hunting killers

Rise of the Nazis: The Manhunt / BBC Two, September

In late July 1944, the advancing Soviet Red Army reached the city of Lublin in eastern Poland. Here it found an industrial-scale killing facility that must have horrified even the most battle-hardened soldiers: the Majdanek concentration and extermination camp, where it's believed that as many as 78,000 people perished. Majdanek was the first major camp to be liberated, and was largely intact when the Soviets took it.

As German forces retreated across territory to which people persecuted by the Nazis had been shipped, the horrors of camps such as Belsen and Auschwitz-Birkenau were exposed, becoming synonymous with the worst excesses of human depravity. And when the war in Europe finally ended, it was clear that those behind the Holocaust and other war crimes must be brought to justice. So in 1945 and 1946, the International Military Tribunal (IMT) tried 21 of the most important surviving Nazi leaders – those who had overseen the regime's political, military and economic processes – in Nuremberg. That city also hosted a dozen further trials of mostly lower-level officials who oversaw the Holocaust on a day-to-day basis.

However, as the latest series in the *Rise of the Nazis* strand explores, this was by no means a full reckoning. How could it be, when so many people had been involved? The new three-part season also reveals how, even as unrepentant Nazis escaped to South America, western powers became progressively less interested in bringing war criminals to justice. Nazis who fled across the Atlantic included Adolf Eichmann, architect of the Final Solution – the genocidal Nazi plan to wipe out Jews – and Josef Mengele, whose nickname 'The Angel of Death' reflected his penchant for conducting macabre medical experiments on Auschwitz inmates.

The final episode moves towards the recent past to make the point that, with memories of World War II fading, thousands of Nazis remained unpunished. Nevertheless, those who had committed atrocities could never consider themselves entirely safe – not while a few dedicated souls remained determined to bring war criminals to justice.

WEEKLY TV & RADIO
Visit ***historyextra.com*** for updates on upcoming TV and radio programmes

GETTY IMAGES X2

Thieves left only an empty case when they stole *The Madonna of the Yarnwinder* in 2003

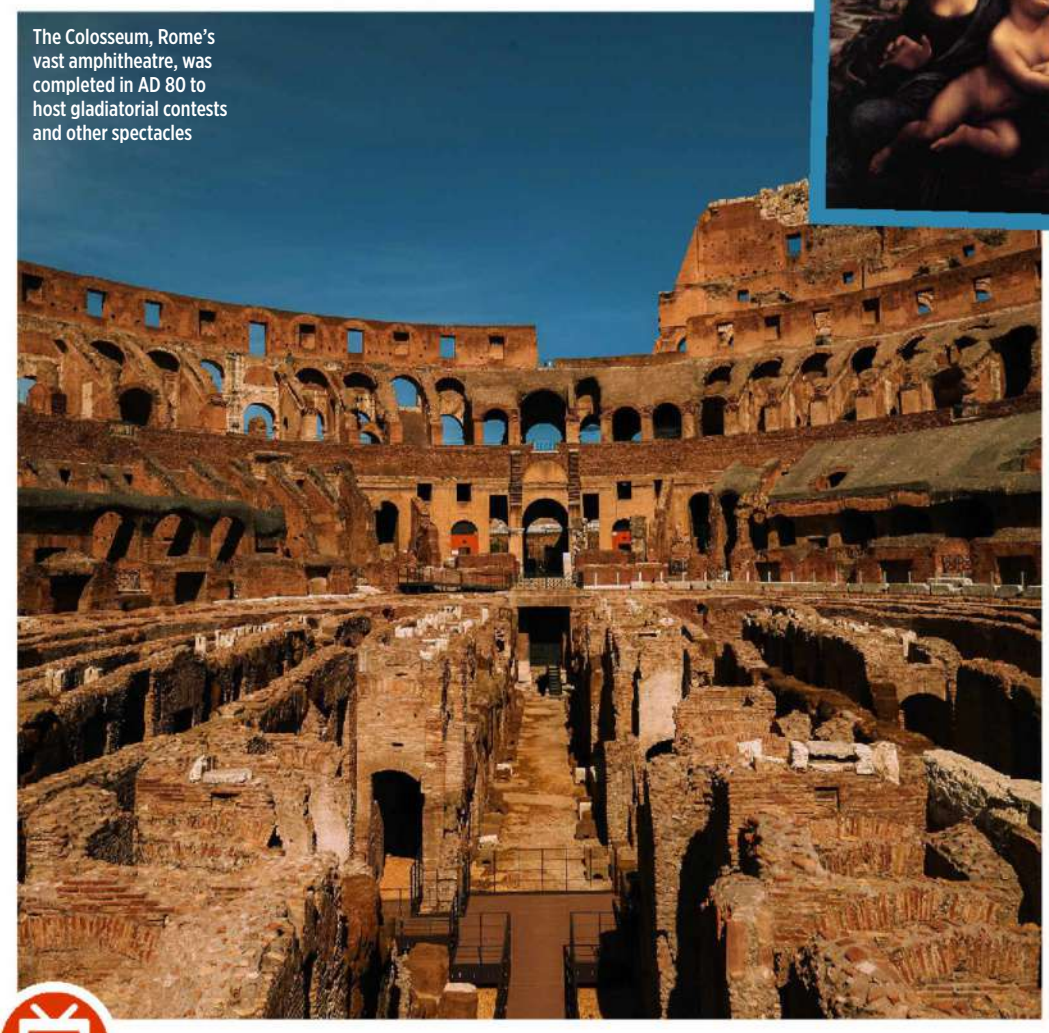
Art heist lessons

The Missing Madonna / BBC Sounds, streaming now

In 2003, two audacious thieves posing as tourists entered Drumlanrig Castle in Dumfries and Galloway. When they left, they took with them *The Madonna of the Yarnwinder*, a 16th-century masterpiece by Leonardo da Vinci that now hangs in Edinburgh's Scottish National Gallery, on long-term loan from the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch.

The extraordinary story of how this precious artwork was retrieved is the subject of a new podcast that tells a barely credible tale of subterfuge, unexpected switchbacks and double-dealing. The series is presented by Olivia Graham, whose private investigator father, Bobbie Graham, was a key figure in the painting's recovery in 2007 – an event that had a lasting impact on his family.

The series features never-before-heard recordings and examines critically the business of recovering stolen artwork in the UK.



The Colosseum, Rome's vast amphitheatre, was completed in AD 80 to host gladiatorial contests and other spectacles

Blood-soaked theatre

Colosseum / BBC iPlayer, streaming now

With its outer wall soaring 48 metres high, Rome's Colosseum was the largest amphitheatre in the ancient world. Built during the Flavian dynasty, the Colosseum hosted its inaugural games in AD c80 – a spectacle that may have involved the slaughter of as many as 9,000 tamed and wild animals.

The bloodshed barely let up in the years that followed, as this eight-part series explores, focusing on the stories of some of the most famous names associated with the Colosseum. Not that every contest in the amphitheatre ended in death. On the amphitheatre's opening day, for example, gladiators Priscus and Verus slugged it out until the emperor Titus (AD 39–81) declared both men to be victors and granted them their freedom – a contest celebrated in verse by the poet Martial.

Others weren't so lucky. The Colosseum was often the site of public executions, including that of Bishop Ignatius of Antioch. Though many biographical details about Ignatius are sketchy – even the date of his death, which may have been as early as AD 108 or as late as AD 140 – his martyrdom remains a key event in the early history of Christianity.

Another episode focuses on the emperor Commodus (AD 161–192), whose life was heavily fictionalised in Ridley Scott's Oscar-laden epic *Gladiator* – but who, as historical accounts reveal, was indeed a megalomaniacal dictator. The only emperor ever to perform in the Colosseum, he unsurprisingly never lost – but also never killed his opponents, whose surrenders he gracefully accepted. He was strangled to death by his wrestling partner, Narcissus, in an assassination plotted by his own advisors – a suitably ignominious end.

The emperor Commodus, who liked to perform in the Colosseum, was strangled by his wrestling partner, Narcissus

International observers arrived at Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022

BBC/OCTOBER FILMS/A+E NETWORKS X1, GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY, X5

Literary adventures

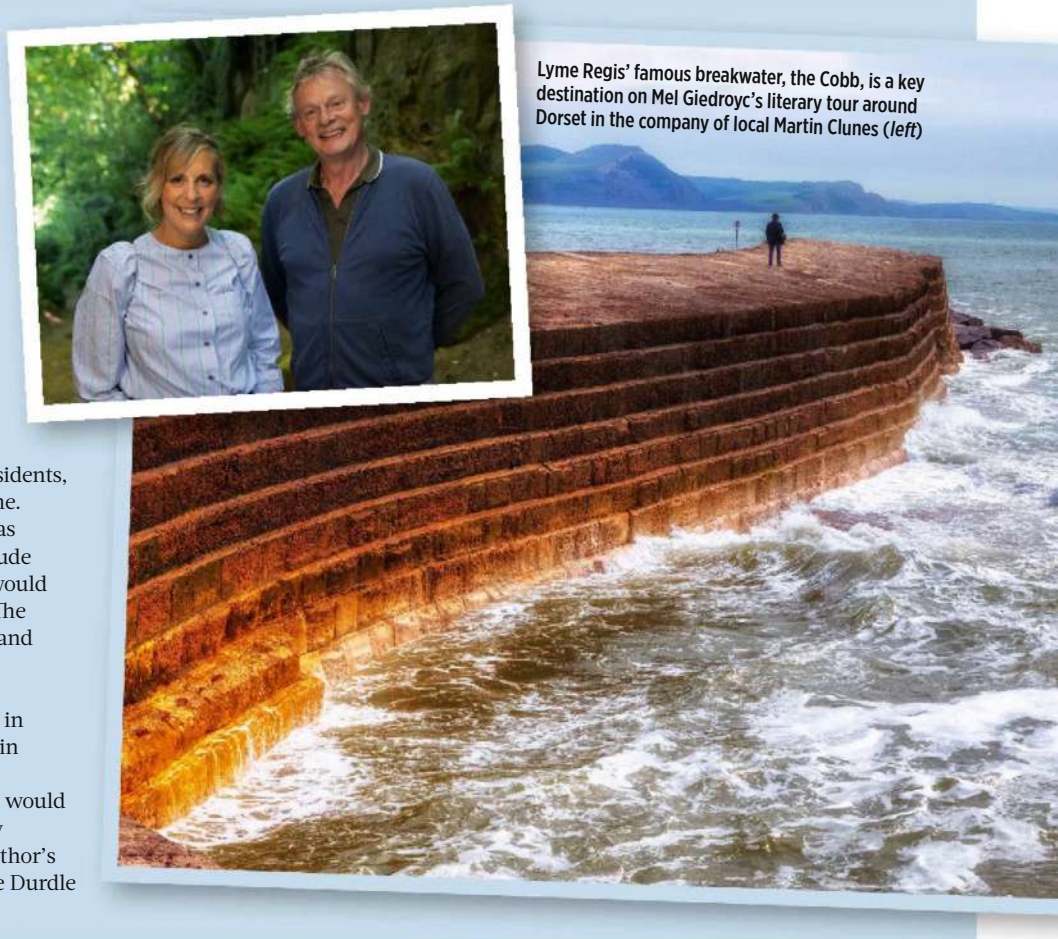
Britain by the Book with Mel Giedroyc and Martin Clunes / ITV, September

In 1968, writer John Fowles (1926–2005) moved to Belmont, an 18th-century villa in Lyme Regis. He spent the rest of his life in the Dorset town with which he became forever associated – especially following the success of his 1969 historical novel *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. That book, set in the Victorian era, was in part inspired by a moment when Fowles saw a lone woman staring out to sea from Lyme's famous breakwater, the Cobb – an image made famous by Meryl Streep in the 1981 movie adaptation.

That's just one of the literary connections to be found in Dorset, as comedian Mel Giedroyc discovers when she embarks on a literary-themed journey around the county. Joining her on her travels is one of Dorset's most famous residents, actor Martin Clunes of *Men Behaving Badly* fame.

Not that all of the books referenced are quite as highbrow as Fowles'. Other highlights here include a trip by steam train through countryside that would have been familiar to Enid Blyton (1897–1968). The children's writer often holidayed in the county, and it's said that Mr Plod from the Noddy books was based on PC Christopher Rone, once the village policeman in Studland. Elsewhere, the duo take in ruined Corfe Castle, the model for Kirrin Castle in the *Famous Five* books.

Of course, no literary journey through Dorset would be complete without mentioning Thomas Hardy (1840–1928). Clunes helpfully reads the great author's work while Giedroyc gets seasick on a trip to see Durdle Door on the Jurassic Coast.



Lyme Regis' famous breakwater, the Cobb, is a key destination on Mel Giedroyc's literary tour around Dorset in the company of local Martin Clunes (*left*)

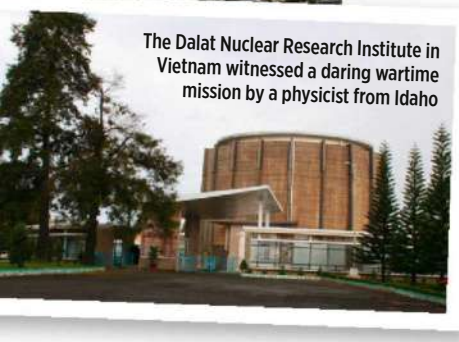
Catastrophe averted

The Reluctant Nuclear Hero / BBC Radio 4, Monday 4 September

Any accident involving nuclear power plays on our deepest fears, but at least the disasters at Chernobyl in 1986 and Fukushima in 2011 took place during peacetime, when authorities were able to react fairly quickly. In contrast, the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine, which was occupied by Russian forces in 2022, lies in a conflict zone.

This isn't a new problem. In 1975, as the Vietnam War entered its endgame, North Vietnam's forces were advancing on Saigon – and on a nuclear facility that the Americans had supplied to the South. This sparked two major concerns: not only might the capture of the reactor potentially yield information about its technology to North Vietnam's Russian allies, but the site was also a source of weapons-grade nuclear fuel. At one point, despite the risk of nuclear fallout, the Americans considered bombing the facility. Instead, they mounted a last ditch operation to retrieve the dangerous nuclear material.

As this one-off documentary reveals, one of those who headed off into the war zone was Wally Hendrickson, a physicist from Idaho. Although he had absolutely no military experience, he bravely volunteered to be dropped at the front line in an effort to remove the fuel rods from the reactor before it was overrun. Now, that's heroism.



The Dalat Nuclear Research Institute in Vietnam witnessed a daring wartime mission by a physicist from Idaho

Learned talk

In Our Time / BBC Radio 4, from Thursday 14 September

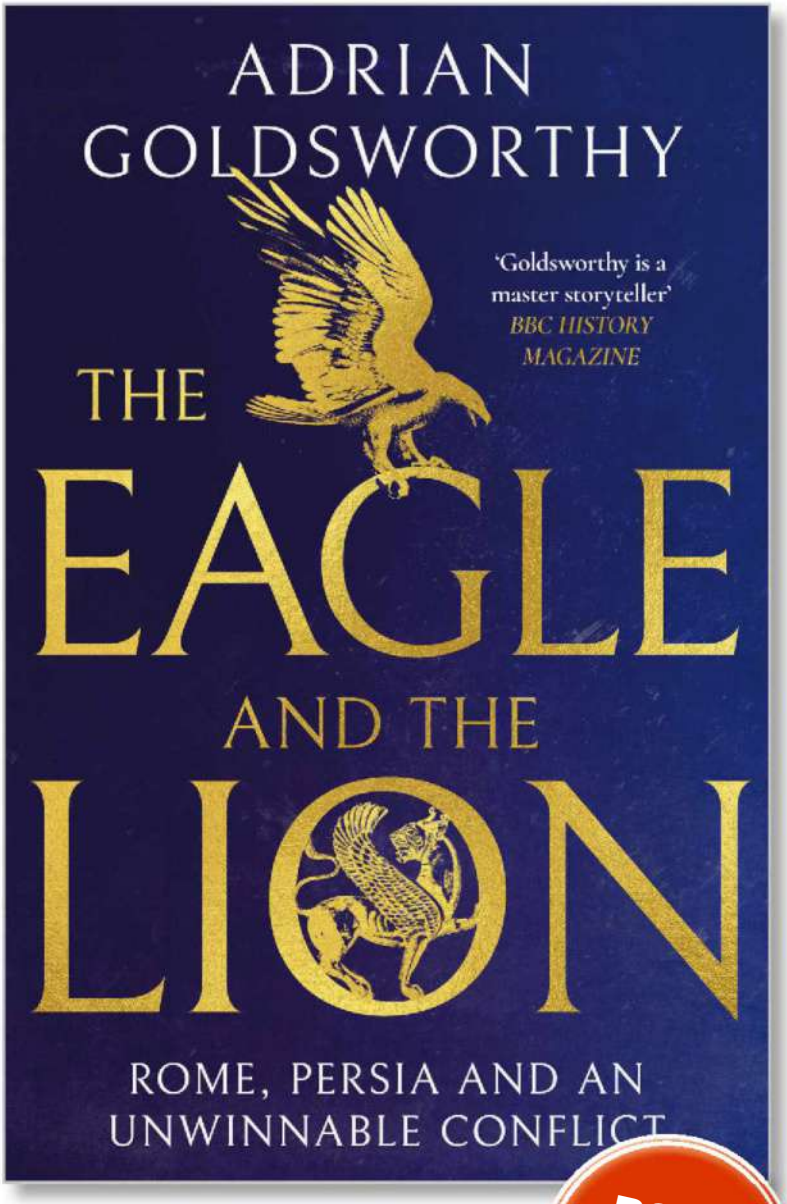
The continuing success of the radio discussion series *In Our Time*, hosted by Melvyn Bragg since its launch in 1998, proves that there's an audience for conversation that illuminates rather than simplifies.

The new series will feature the 1,000th episode, which will be dedicated to *The Seventh Seal* (*pictured above*), Swedish director Ingmar Bergman's classic historical fantasy film, released in 1957.

Other upcoming episodes include a show on physicist Albert Einstein, and another on John Maynard Keynes' *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (1919), which argued on economic grounds for a more generous peace at the end of World War I.

BOOKS & PODCASTS

THIS MONTH'S BEST HISTORICAL READS AND LISTENS



BOOK OF THE MONTH

The Eagle and the Lion: Rome, Persia and an Unwinnable Conflict

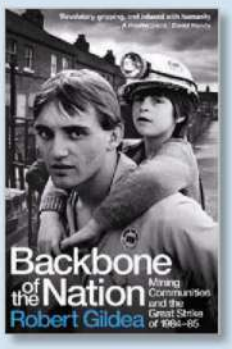
By Adrian Goldsworthy
Apollo, £35, hardback, 640 pages

Adrian Goldsworthy's forays back into the distant past always make for compelling reading, and his latest is no exception. Charting the prolonged conflict between the ancient world's big beasts – Rome and Persia – he reveals why, despite the rivalry spanning hundreds of years, neither civilisation was able to claim a decisive victory. He never loses sight of the human cost of such all-encompassing war, either, highlighting the enormous cost of two cultures dead set on conquest and triumph.

Backbone of the Nation: Mining Communities and the Great Strike of 1984–85

By Robert Gildea
Yale University Press, £25, hardback, 496 pages

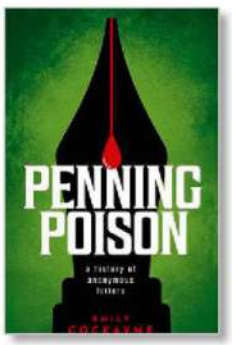
The bitter, protracted miners' strike that spanned almost a year between 1984 and 1985 is chronicled in this expansive oral history. Drawing on almost 150 newly conducted interviews with men, women and children who joined the fight against the closure of collieries around the UK, it provides an evocative exploration of the communities in which they lived and worked – and the activism and networks they drew upon in a bid to secure their livelihoods.



Penning Poison: A History of Anonymous Letters

By Emily Cockayne
Oxford University Press, £20, hardback, 320 pages

Ever felt the urge to write a really snippy note? Even if it's just to admonish over-consumption of the communal milk, there's a lot of power in an anonymous missive. Here, Emily Cockayne delves back into the heyday of the poison-pen letter: the decades from the 18th to the 20th centuries when there was something of a spate of venomous messages. Some point at scandal, some are scandalous in their own right, and others tap into a rich vein of English eccentricity.



Jane Austen's Wardrobe

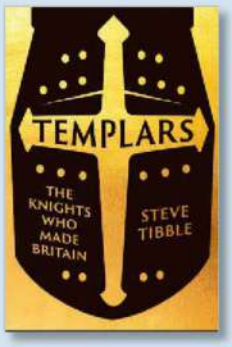
By Hilary Davidson
Yale University Press, £25, hardback, 240 pages

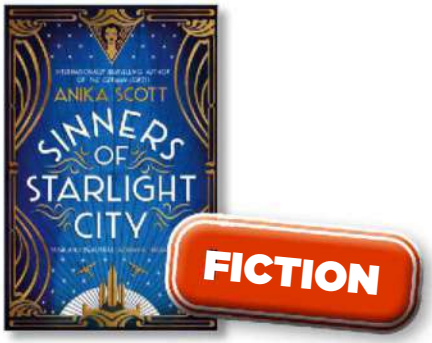
This lavishly illustrated book offers readers a unique peek into the clothes worn by celebrated Regency author Jane Austen – her shawls and cloaks, rings and bracelets, and – of course – bonnets and handkerchiefs. Drawing on extensive new research, including her 161 surviving letters, the Austen that emerges here is warm and wry, fashionable but frugal. It's an illuminating glimpse not only into her celebrated life but the social conventions and styles of her time.

Templars: The Knights Who Made Britain

By Steve Tibble
Yale University Press, £25, hardback, 352 pages

Often caught up in with lurid tales of fanaticism, even Devil worship, the Knights Templar have very real roots as a medieval military unit. Steve Tibble's fascinating book sets out to separate fact from fiction, sketching the order's 12th-century rise, its battles in the Crusades, and its brutal end. Far from this violence, however, he also stresses its role in peacemaking back in England, and the way in which it played a crucial role in the founding of its early state.





Sinners of Starlight City

By Anika Scott
Duckworth, £9.99, paperback, 352 pages

This dynamic and atmospheric novel catapults readers back in time to the 1933 Chicago World's Fair, to which visitors flock for a celebration of the city's past – and a taste of the future. Its attractions include Madame Mystique, whose burlesque act intrigues and scandalises in equal measure. Yet her performance conceals a deeper intent: to avenge a death in the family, one with links to a storm brewing across the ocean in Europe.

PODCAST WHAT TO LISTEN TO...

Each month we bring you three of our favourite podcast offerings from the BBC and HistoryExtra

Everything You Wanted to Know: dog history

historyextra.com/dog-history-qa

HistoryExtra's 'Everything You Wanted to Know' series turns its attention to our canine companions, teaming up with Professor Julie-Marie Strange to investigate everything from the earliest domestication to how a dognapping case changed the life of poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning. It truly offers – with apologies – paws for thought.

Horrible Histories: series two

bbc.co.uk/programmes/p09rtwbb

Never one to shy away from alliteration, the *Horrible Histories* team here return with a second run of their 'putrid podcasts'. Each episode imagines what a key historical figure might do if granted access to a podcasting studio, with characters this time around including Joan of Arc and Mary Seacole. And yes, Rattus Rattus also puts in an appearance.

History's Greatest Cities: series two

historyextra.com/greatest-cities

It's back! The podcast series charting the history of Europe's metropolises has returned for a new series, offering insights into the evolution of Florence, Budapest, Amsterdam and more. Each episode sees presenter Paul Bloomfield joined by an expert guide, exploring the city's origin stories and the people who made its streets their home.

BEST OF THE WEB

PODCASTS, VIDEOS AND QUIZZES FROM THE HISTORYEXTRA ARCHIVE

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VIDEOS

Why is Napoleon such a figure of ridicule in cinema?

historyextra.com/napoleon-video

Dr Zack White dissects the trailer for Ridley Scott's upcoming film *Napoleon*, which he believes challenges Hollywood's tendency to depict the emperor as the short egomaniac of the 'Napoleon complex' myth.

What was Albert Einstein's involvement in the creation of the atomic bomb?

historyextra.com/einstein-video

Einstein's pioneering insights into the Universe and his horror at the rise of Nazism were critical to the creation of the atomic bomb. In this video, Professor Gareth Williams discusses the physicist's influence and regret.

Five things to look out for when visiting a castle

historyextra.com/castle-video

Do you know your mottes from your machicolations? Dr Marc Morris takes us on a tour around the key defensive and decorative features typical of castle architecture and their evolution over time.

PODCAST SERIES

▲ Cuban Missile Crisis: World on the Brink

historyextra.com/cuban-missile-crisis

Sixty-one years ago this October, the world held its breath as the US and the Soviet Union entered a stand-off over the latter's decision to station nuclear missiles on Cuba. In this four-part series, Elinor Evans revisits those 13 agonising days, and asks historians whether humanity really came close to Armageddon.

◀ The Mary Rose: Secrets of a Tudor Warship

historyextra.com/mary-rose

In this six-part series, presenter Emily Briffett dives into the story of Henry VIII's famous warship, shedding light on its dramatic sinking and eventual recovery from the depths of the Solent. Along the way, she speaks to some of the *Mary Rose*'s leading experts, and the conservators who are working hard to ensure that the wreck is preserved for posterity.

QUIZZES

▶ Quiz of the week

Put your knowledge of the latest history news, articles and videos from the *HistoryExtra* website to the test with our weekly brainteaser: *historyextra.com/weekly-quiz*

▶ How much do you know about the Civil War?

Test your knowledge of the 17th-century conflict that put the Crown at loggerheads with Parliament: *historyextra.com/civil-war-quiz*

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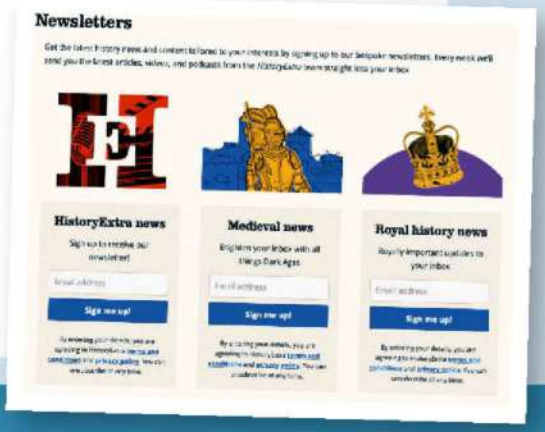


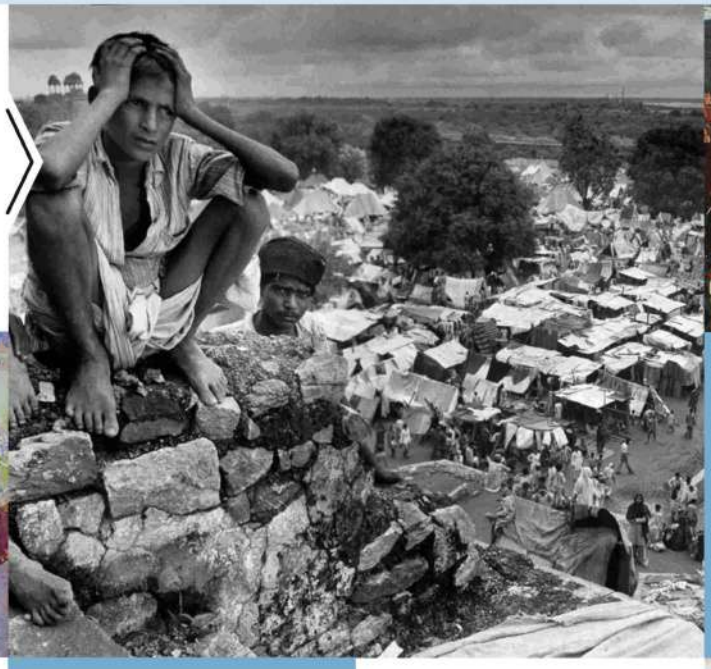
GETTY IMAGES X6, ALAMY X2

6 PODCAST EPISODES ABOUT INDIA TO STREAM NOW

This month, we take a look at the best *HistoryExtra* podcast episodes on India and its past, featuring historians Nandini Das, Jon Wilson, Manan Ahmed Asif, Anwesha Roy, Richard M Eaton and George Morton-Jack

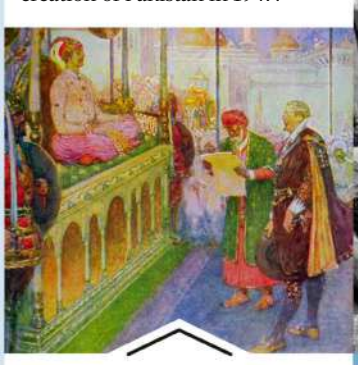
INDIA DIVIDED

In this comprehensive episode recorded last summer to mark the 75th anniversary of Partition, Anwesha Roy answers listeners' questions about the end of British rule and the terrible violence and suffering that accompanied the independence of India and the creation of Pakistan in 1947.



THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Historian Jon Wilson joined us in September 2020 to answer the most popular queries about the English trading company, founded in 1600, whose influence during the 18th and 19th centuries secured geopolitical control of India and paved the way for British imperialism.



COURTING INDIA

Nandini Das explores the unlikely origins of England's foothold on the Indian subcontinent in this March 2023 episode. Discussing the challenges faced by the first English embassy to the Mughal court in 1616, she reveals why the British empire's future dominance was far from assured.

INVENTING INDIA

Was there a unified multicultural society living on the subcontinent prior to European colonialism? In October 2021, historian Manan Ahmed Asif spoke to us about his book *The Loss of Hindustan*, asserting that modern India replaced a diverse and much older civilisation.

INDIA IN THE TRENCHES

What roles did the peoples of British imperial India play during World War I? George Morton-Jack, author of *The Indian Empire at War*, assesses the important contributions made by a vast number of Indian soldiers to Britain's war aims on the Western Front and elsewhere.

REASSESSING INDIA

How did India come to nurture so many languages, cuisines, customs and faiths? Richard M Eaton joined us in autumn 2020 to discuss his book *India in the Persianate Age, 1000–1765*, exploring the subcontinent's place at the crossroads of cultures over nearly eight centuries.

HISTORY EXTRA PODCAST

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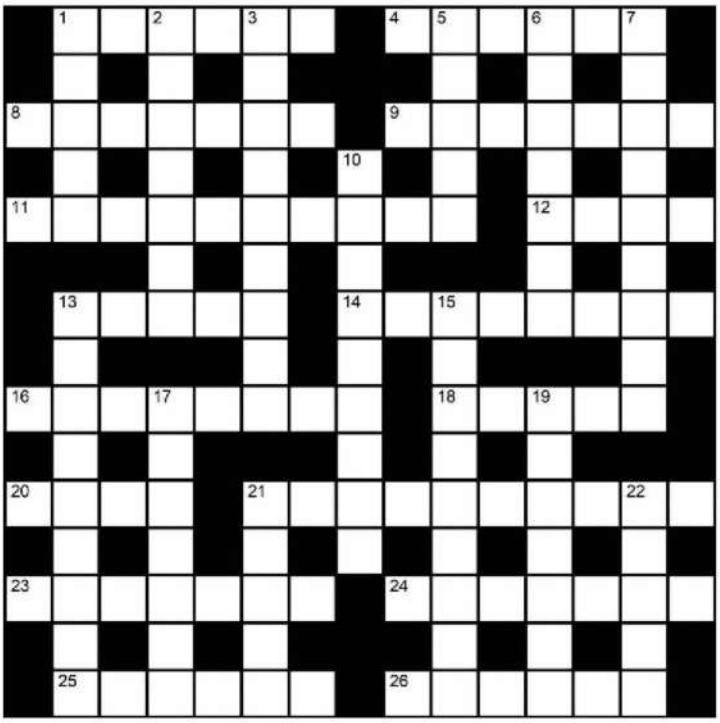
ACROSS

1 Dance craze of the early 1960s (6)
4 City in Austria, known for its rich musical heritage (6)
8 African-Roman playwright of the second century BC (7)
9 See 12 across
11 Country of Central America, independent since 1824 (2,8)
12/9 Notorious court of 17th-century England (4,7)
13 Biblical site of a tower "whose top may reach unto heaven" (5)
14 Historic district of inner-city Manchester (4,4)
16 Site of a 1704 battle in the War of the Spanish Succession (8)
18 1966 film starring Michael Caine (5)
20 Work by Ann Griffiths, Charles Wesley or Sabine Baring-Gould, perhaps (4)
21 First 'garden city' in England, built in the early 1900s (10)
23 Denis ___ (1713–84), French Encyclopédiste (7)
24 See 2 Down
25 Saudi capital since 1823 (6)
26 City of northwest Spain, reputedly founded in AD 761 (6)

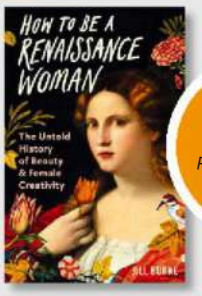
DOWN

1 Proverbially ancient invention (5)
2/24 Historic Oxford pub (3,4,3,4)
3 Vita ___-West (1892–1962), garden designer and writer (9)
5 The blood of the gods, in Greek myth (5)
6 Greek goddess of retribution (7)
7 ___ Dumas (1802–70), French novelist and playwright (9)
10 Scottish author of *The Wealth of Nations* (1723–90) (4,5)
13 1959 novel by Keith Waterhouse (5,4)
15 Alexei ___ (1906–77), celebrated Soviet coal miner (9)
17 "Get thee to a ___" – *Hamlet*, Act 3, Scene 1 (7)
19 Feudal trustee in medieval England (7)
21 Marie ___ (1870–1922), musical hall singer and comedian (5)
22 Region of Kenya once notorious for its man-eating lions (5)



Set by Richard Smyth

CHANCE TO WIN



BOOK WORTH £25 FOR THREE WINNERS

How to Be a Renaissance Woman
by Jill Burke

HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **BBC History Revealed, October 2023 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA** or email them to **october2023@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on **1 November 2023**.

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SOLUTION Nº 123

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••• ON SALE 28 SEPTEMBER •••

PHARAOH TUTANKHAMUN

Delve into the many myths surrounding the life of the Boy King and the discovery of his tomb in 1922 – from his short reign to his mysterious death

PLUS... IN PICTURES: BACK TO SCHOOL WHAT IF... THE SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA HAD NEVER HAPPENED? **LIFE HACKS FROM HISTORY: HOW TO RAISE A BABY** TOP 10 EXTINCT ANIMALS **HISTORICAL CONUNDRUMS ANSWERED** AND MUCH MORE...

CROSSWORD WINNERS

The three lucky winners of the prize crossword in issue 122 are as follows:

R Fraser, Highlands
A Gilbert, Tyne and Wear
J Taylor, London

Congratulations! You've each won a copy of *Empires of the Normans: Makers of Europe, Conquerors of Asia* by Levi Roach.

We will post your prizes out as soon as possible.

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ARRESTING IMAGES FROM THE ANNALS OF THE PAST

GOSSIP GIRL 1944

From the 1930s, Hollywood was in thrall to gossip columnists with the power to make or break careers. Few were more influential – and troubling – than Hedda Hopper. Born Elda Furry in 1885, she enjoyed a prolific acting career until the late 1930s, when she turned to writing in newspapers and magazines. Garnering some 35 million readers, she used her columns to launch a crusade against so-called "Commies" and others she condemned for dissolute behaviour. Hopper was also a key figure behind the Hollywood blacklist that targeted actors, directors and writers with perceived communist sympathies, including Charlie Chaplin. Here, she holds forth during a case involving young actor Joan Barry, who claimed Chaplin was the father of her illegitimate baby – and a man of such "moral turpitude", said Hopper, that he should be deported.

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